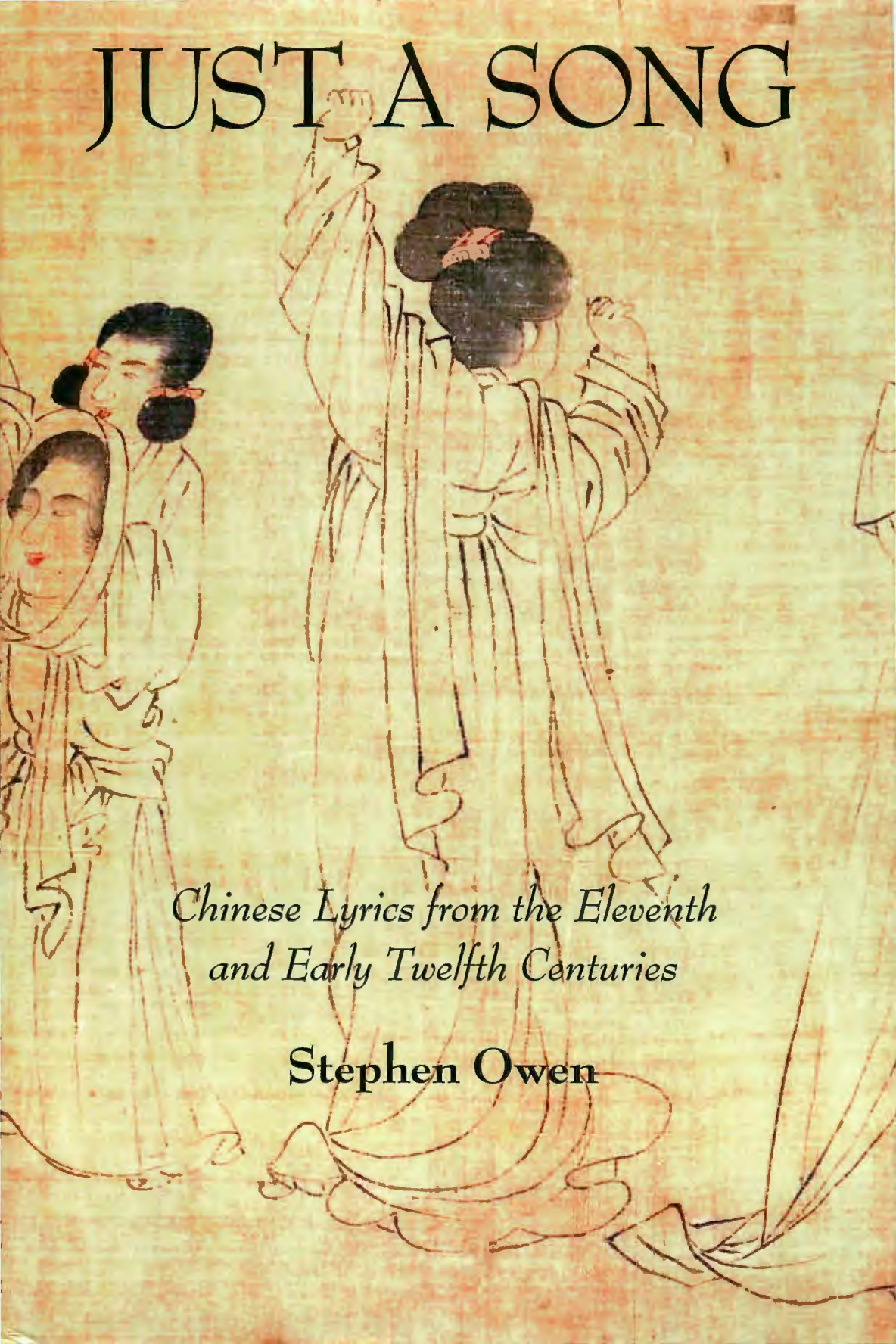


JUST A SONG

The background of the book cover is a traditional Chinese ink wash painting. It depicts three women in long, flowing robes. The woman in the center is seen from the back, with her arms raised in a graceful, expressive gesture, possibly dancing or singing. She has her hair styled in a high, elaborate bun. To her left, two other women are visible, looking towards her. The painting is executed in a minimalist style with fine ink lines and light washes of color, set against a textured, aged paper background.

*Chinese Lyrics from the Eleventh
and Early Twelfth Centuries*

Stephen Owen

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"Song Lyric," *ci*, remains one of the most loved forms of Chinese poetry. From the early eleventh century through the first quarter of the twelfth century, song lyric evolved from an impromptu contribution in a performance practice to a full literary genre, in which the text might be read more often than performed. Young women singers, either indentured or private entrepreneurs, were at the heart of song practice throughout the period; the authors of the lyrics were notionally mostly male. A strange gender dynamic arose, in which men often wrote in the voice of a woman and her imagined feelings, then appropriated that sensibility for themselves.

As an essential part of becoming literature, a history was constructed for the new genre. At the same time the genre claimed a new set of aesthetic values to radically distinguish it from older "Classical Poetry," *shi*. In a world that was either pragmatic or moralizing (or both), song lyric was a discourse of sensibility, which literally gave a beautiful voice to everything that seemed increasingly to be disappearing in the new Song dynasty world of righteousness and public advancement.

Stephen Owen is James Bryant Conant University Professor at Harvard University.

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Just a Song

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Just a Song

CHINESE LYRICS FROM THE ELEVENTH AND
EARLY TWELFTH CENTURIES

Stephen Owen

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Drift Away

Words and Music by Mentor Williams

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Some books stay on the back burner too long. Every time the scholar returns to them, he has to redo everything all over again. In this case I found a virtue in delays: what I didn't notice in the first few run-throughs became obvious when returning to the same texts later. In reading through the sources once again, one always finds what had been overlooked.

I want to thank the students who participated in recurring seminars on song lyric over the past decade and more. Although writing and scholarship is, in many ways, a solitary activity, teaching gives it life. Material from the early chapters was presented in several lectures at Fudan University in Shanghai and in two lectures at the University of Colorado in 2012 and 2013. The latter of these, "Who Wrote That? Attribution in Northern Song Ci," was published in *Reading Medieval Chinese Poetry: Text, Context, and Culture*, edited by Paul Kroll (Leiden: Brill, 2015). I also want to especially thank my students Liu Chen, Du Feiran, and Mai Huijun for volunteering to undertake a Chinese translation of the book.

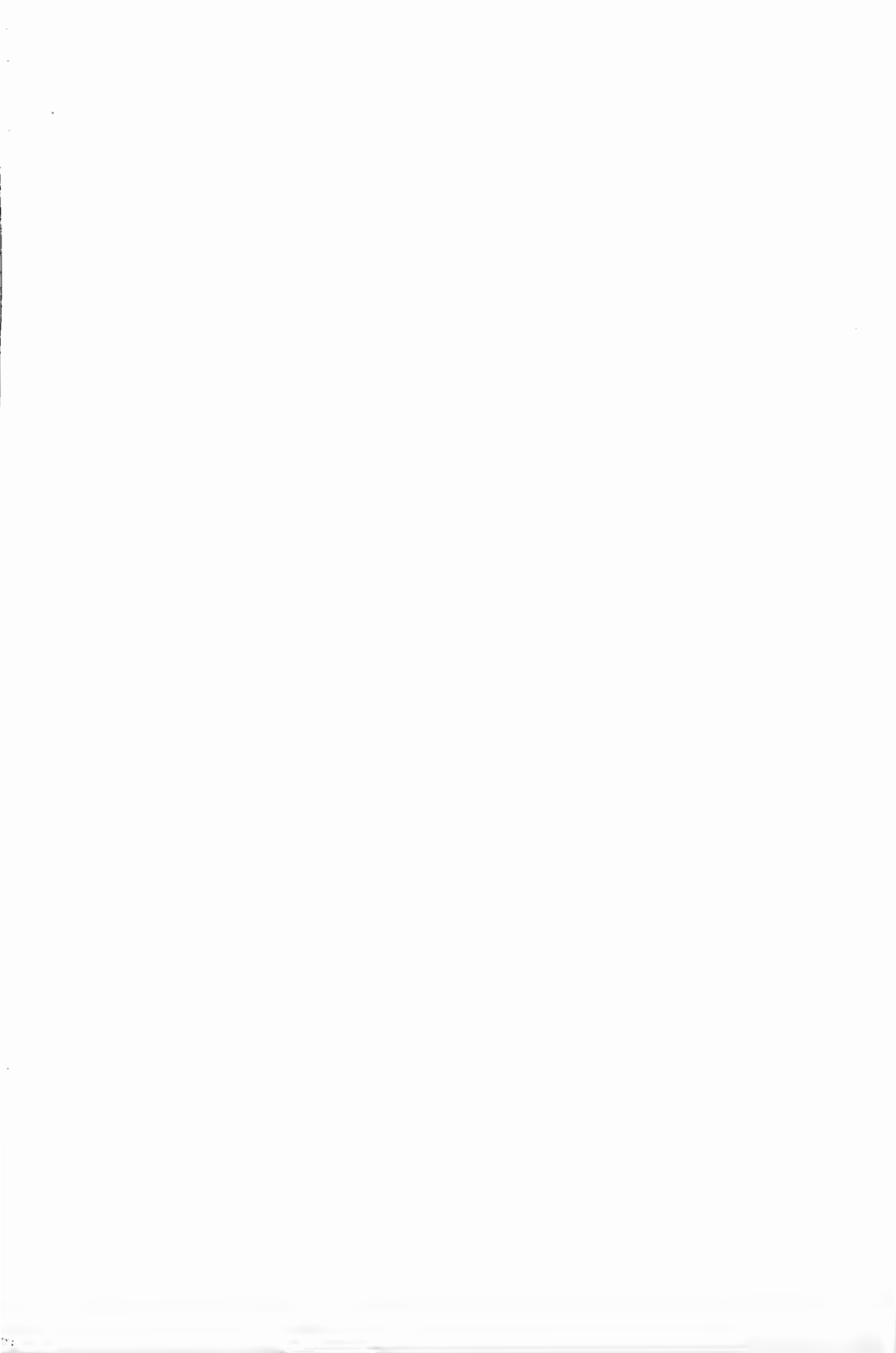
There is a good reason for the convention that authors thank their families in Acknowledgments. The support and joy (and sometimes, the necessary distraction) that families supply underpin the long process. So thank you, Xiaofei and George.

—Stephen Owen, Newton, MA

For Sam and Maddie, "the twins"

CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
Introduction	I
Part I. Setting the Stage	
1. Early Circulation	21
2. Origins	48
Part II. The Early and Mid-Eleventh Century	
3. The <i>Yuezhang ji</i> and Liu Yong	63
4. The <i>Xiaoling</i> Collections (I)	99
5. The <i>Xiaoling</i> Collections (II)	125
6. Yan Jidao	163
Part III. The Age of Su Shi	
7. Su Shi	195
8. The Generation after Su Shi	228
9. Su Shi's Protégés	244
10. Qin Guan	261
11. He Zhu	285
12. Zhou Bangyan	308
Part IV. Into the Twelfth Century	
13. Recovering a History	343
14. The Last Generation of the Northern Song and On	358
Conclusion by Way of Continuing	385
Reference Matter	
Appendix A: The Manuscripts of Feng Yansi	387
Appendix B: Lyrics Adrift	392
Appendix C: The "High Style" and Its Opposites	394
<i>Bibliography and Abbreviations</i>	396
<i>Index</i>	409





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INTRODUCTION

Oh give me the beat boys and free my soul
I wanna get lost in your rock n' roll
And drift away

—Mentor Williams

I always resent how this body of mine
doesn't belong to me,
when can I forget this constant travail?
Toward night's end the wind calms
and the crêpe ripples flatten.
My small boat will go off from this point on,
to give the rest of my life to the rivers and seas.

—Su Shi

Song lyric (*ci* 詞) in the Song dynasty presents us with an interesting problem. Serious scholars of this period do not take lyric seriously. It does not represent the Song dynasty they know, characterized by the end of the old aristocratic oligarchy, the shift in power from the military to centralized authority (supported by local elites), and the increasingly strong intervention of this central authority in many areas. There was a revived and more reflective Confucianism (Daoxue, "The Learning of the Way"), initially independent of the state, but by the end of the dynasty permeating the social order and the reformed examination system. Commerce grew, and political theory began to be applied to state management. It was an intellectually very "serious" and rationalizing (if not entirely rational) dynasty. It was a dynasty searching for perspicuous coherence on many levels.

And yet the discursive genre most closely associated with the dynasty is song lyric, where the coherent whole is irrelevant and nothing matters more than lost love, the pleasure and mood of the moment, a cup of ale or a bowl of tea. In roughly 1028 when a high official, recalled to the capital and evidently on a strict schedule, passed the district where Yan Shu was assigned, Yan held a party and wrote these words for a young woman singer to perform for the official at a party:

There is only drunken chanting
 to ease the pain of parting,
 no need, dawn and evening,
 to hurry your homeward schedule—
 rainy branches and misty leaves
 catch up human feelings.

It is a most gentle protest. It is a reminder of claims other than sedulous devotion to one's duty on the part of a loyal servant of the empire.

The idea of "escapism" is generally treated with contempt, but that is merely a way to dismiss something fundamental in a culture. The Song state and elite saw themselves as custodians of public values on a level unthinkable in the Tang. There was a hierarchy of priorities that had a claim on the time and attention of the state's servants. Song lyric, called the "surplus of classical poetry" (*shiyu* 詩餘), was what was left over after the claims on the time and attention of public servants who were interested in song lyric, and it increasingly seemed to signify a slackness of propriety that might lead one down the path to vice. One should spend one's time and energy serving the empire and the family; if there is a surplus, one could write classical poetry. If there is still leftover energy, one could then compose lyrics. These were the least of marginally acceptable endeavors.

Song lyrics often proclaimed the poet's regret at having become an official, or encouraged the listener not to care about advancement. Far more commonly, state, career, and family disappear altogether in lyrics; there is only the beloved—present, imagined, or lost—burned into mind and memory. This is the point where the sanctioned hierarchy of public values breaks down.

"Escapism" per se is not interesting. The particular shape of escape, however, is the negative image of the social system that produced it, exposing the real face of how that system was experienced and how it failed human needs.

We might put this a different way: the quest for ethical and political coherence gradually refines out everything in human experience that resists coherence until you have something that requires a segregated space in the social whole, the "leftovers," another way of naming a "surplus." The words that live in that space are despised: "little lyrics"

(*xiaoci* 小詞), as they were often called. They represented a voice of individual sensibility in a world that left little room for it. At the same time, those who mostly lived and worked in the larger social world were drawn to the voices of lyric, in some cases more than to anything else. Indeed, the very dream of a coherent polity and moral cosmos may have depended on keeping all those contrary forces in a discursive ghetto, even if it was visited by all.

In the Song dynasty anecdote there is a standard perplexity expressed when a voice from the classical literary world comments on a lyricist. It often takes the following form: "X is a wonderful classical poet (/learned scholar), but he cares (/his readers care) only about his song lyrics—isn't that too bad!" No one reflects on the disjunction between assumed, socially sanctioned values and the actual values that are implicit in what happens. The socially constituted forms of "irrelevant" enterprises become significant through the attention vested in them, whether through participation or disapproval.

Gender was central here. Women were increasingly excluded from elite classical genres in the Song. The Tang representation of flirtation, desire, and longing had all but disappeared in Song classical poetry, and there was a much-diminished role for *yuefu* 樂府, a genre in which the poet assumed a conventional role that was usually not that of the poet himself. Mothers, wives, and even daughters were "serious," part of the seriousness of family, but they were allowed only the most marginal presence in classical literature.

But song lyric was initially strongly associated with women, either directly as performers of song and as the subjects of song, or indirectly in the discourse of a feminized sensibility on the part of the male lyricists, who wrote about such things as "rainy branches and misty leaves." It is true that the great Su Shi was drawn to a "masculine" version of song lyric, but Su Shi's "masculine" is marked in the same way that the feminine is marked, in contrast to relatively unmarked gender in classical poetry. In other words, the discursive gender segregation of lyric produced the marked "masculine" discourse in lyric as a byproduct of the legacy of a genre routinely marked as "feminine."

An anecdote about the lyricist Yan Shu illustrates the story of gender and genre segregation. Yan Shu was said to hold parties daily, but

he made no prior preparations. As guests arrived, food and drink would be put out, with singers and musicians performing for the guests amid general merriment. After an interval Yan Shu "would dismiss them [the singers] saying, 'You have demonstrated *your* art fully; now we are going to demonstrate *our* art.' Then he would provide brushes and paper and join them [his guests] in composing classical poems" (即罷遣歌樂曰：汝曹呈藝已徧吾當呈藝。乃具筆札相與賦詩)。¹

To fully savor the strangeness of this one must know that the songs performed by the women during the first phase of the party were all lyrics notionally composed by men, including by the host Yan Shu himself. Something very odd was happening in Chinese culture.

We will follow the story of lyric through the eleventh century into the early twelfth century, as it went from a performance practice—scribbled out on a piece of paper and handed to a singer at a party—to a fully literary form, with lyricists compiling their own lyric collections, with prefaces, which circulated for reading. The genre gradually became more legitimate. But still it was segregated—published in separate collections or, if included in an author's "collected works," often put at the "back of the bus," either after the classical poetry or at the very end. There is no hint that the lyricists and the aficionados of lyric wanted it any other way. The genre's segregation was also a protected space. The relatively direct representation of the courtship game and of love, loss, and longing in earlier lyric was gradually overshadowed by an increasingly figurative displacement of those themes; but within the increasing technical mastery and erudite reuse of snippets of Tang poetry, the dreamlike disorientation of the genre still survived.

From the twelfth century on classical poetry was in crisis, its long cultural dominance collapsing before the contempt of Daoxue: classical poetry was not in itself "serious." There were endless debates among the poets on how poetry "should be" written and attempts to justify the form, using the categories and concerns of Daoxue, which ensured

1. Ye Mengde 葉夢得 (1077–1148), *Bishu lubua* 避暑錄話. QSB, second series, vol. 10, p. 267.

that it could never be fully “serious.”² The lyricists and the lovers of lyric didn’t care; they continued to work creatively. Their happy segregation from an increasingly totalizing world is perhaps best expressed by the mere negative definition offered by Li Qingzhao: “song lyric is a different family altogether.”

While song lyric did pass from performance text to literature during the period covered by this study, it is important to remember that a great many lyrics never entirely left the realm of performance. In addition to performance or, perhaps, in conjunction with a performance, lyrics also circulated in manuscripts shared among aficionados, often with occasions and comments attached. Zeng Zao’s 1146 preface to his anthology *Yuefu and Lyrics in the High Style* (*Yuefu yaci* 樂府雅詞) includes the collections he had in his library, with an addendum of “over a hundred lyrics that people have always loved, but the names of the authors are not all known.”³ This seems clearly not to have been a single manuscript collection, but rather sheets of paper with one or two lyrics, some with authors and some without. These lyrics might have come from full collections, but Zeng’s comment on their popularity suggests that even in the mid-twelfth century such lyrics made the transition back and forth between performance and writing without necessarily carrying the designation of an author with them.

The transition to literature from a performance text or from a text circulating without pedigree among aficionados was not an easy one. Even in an age of copyright and Google, we often do not know who wrote the lyrics of a song we hear and like. The version we become familiar with seems to be the “right one”; but when we investigate, we often find that the lyrics changed from one singer to another and that even the authorship may be contested. When lyrics become “literature,” they enter an order of authors arranged chronologically. A text is supposed to belong to only one author. The same was even more true in China in the twelfth century. The lyric was eventually tied to a single person, and the

2. For an excellent account of the dilemma of classical poetry in the Southern Song, see Michael Fuller, *Drifting among Rivers and Lakes: Southern Song Dynasty Poetry and the Problem of Literary History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013).

3. *Yuefu yaci*. *Sibu congkan*, first series. (Shanghai: Shangwu, 1919–36).

drifting words were moored. As we shall see, song lyric was remarkably resistant to that order; song lyrics often became unmoored and tied up somewhere else in another lyricist's collection or under another name in an anthology.

This aspect of song lyric needs to be considered alongside the lyrics themselves, and we will do so in this book. It is not something that is immediately visible in contemporary Chinese scholarship, however, where the order of authors and attached lyrics seems an established fact. We have Tang Guizhang's 唐圭璋 monumental *Complete Song Lyrics of the Song Dynasty* (*Quan Song ci* 全宋詞), the first version published in 1940, and the authoritative revised edition published in 1965, and again in 1991. There we have the corpus, organized chronologically by author, with the sources and questions of attribution clearly noted.⁴ Subsequent scholars have tried heroically to chronologically arrange the lyrics of important authors. We have numerous compendia of critical material, individual collections of lyrics copiously annotated, and an abundant critical literature, including other histories of lyric in the Song.

If I could accept this rich scholarly legacy uncritically, this would be a very different book. I am still completely dependent on this scholarship, but there are fundamental problems in the assumptions and procedures that require sorting out before we can do other kinds of work. Chinese scholarship has sought an order of authors, but authors are a function of extant books; and when we think of the history of song lyric as a history of its books (and the nature of their sources) rather than of authors, our understanding of the history of the genre changes.

Once we open the bibliographical Pandora's Box and take a look at the history of the particular books, we find a world of uncertainties like nothing in Song classical literature. I will not give all the details in this book, but I will discuss some particularly important cases and patterns. We see Ming and Qing editors claiming to have found Song editions, only to discover that the editor has "corrected" the text—added lyrics to make it more "complete," or subtracted lyrics that the editors believed

4. Tang Guizhang's stunning erudition in noting multiple attributions does not, however, distinguish alternative attributions in the Song from those in the Ming or Qing. One has to know the bibliography of source texts to decide whether an alternative attribution has an early basis.

were inauthentic. Having a Song edition was the goal, and the next best thing were the traced editions (new imprints based on tracing an older edition), some of whose originals survive and some of which do not.

All the eleventh-century lyric collections before Su Shi—with the sole exception of the two extant versions of Ouyang Xiu's collected lyrics—have their earliest extant text in two partial manuscripts of a 1441 compendium of lyric collections by Wu Ne titled *Lyrics by a Hundred Masters* (*Baijia ci* 百家詞). This was probably partially based on a lost commercial printed collection of the same name from the thirteenth century, but it differs enough in the collections included to give pause. This is the earliest source for the lyrics of Feng Yansi, Yan Shu, Zhang Xian, Liu Yong, Yan Jidao, and a great many others.

This brings us to the core problem. In collections of Song classical literature, with their prefaces, colophons, and notations in bibliographies, we can pretty much follow a collection from the author's own manuscript to the present day. We do *not* have this kind of knowledge for Northern Song lyric collections. We rarely know how and when collections were made and, equally important, how stable they were in early circulation. If we have a mid-fifteenth century manuscript of a thirteenth-century commercial imprint, we have reason to be grateful; but we usually know very little indeed of how each lyric collection reached the thirteenth-century imprint—and we have every reason to worry about the scruples of thirteenth-century commercial publishers. In this book I will try to tease out from our scanty information something of the early history of collections.

I do not plan to treat Tang and Five Dynasties song lyric, with the exception of the collection of the Southern Tang courtier Feng Yansi, whose lyrics were part of the performance repertoire of the mid-eleventh century. The anthology *Collection from Among the Flowers* (*Huajian ji* 花間集), with a preface from 940, has been extensively studied by Anna Shields.⁵ *Huajian ji* has a secure place in the history of song lyric, but it is *not* part of a continuous history. Apart from the individual songs that somehow made their way into Feng Yansi's collected lyrics, we see no

5. Anna Shields, *Crafting a Collection: The Cultural Contexts and Poetic Practice of the Huajian ji 花間集 (Collection from among the Flowers)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006).

awareness of the anthology until around the turn of the twelfth century. The return of the *Huajian ji* and its undatable supplement, *Before the Ale-cup* (*Zunqian ji* 尊前集), were part of the reconstruction of the genre's history that accompanied its gradual transformation into "literature." Without that new interest in the past of the genre, it is unlikely that *Huajian ji* would have been printed in the beautiful 1148 edition that still survives. Moreover, without that imprint and the attention that *Huajian ji* received, it is unlikely that the anthology itself would have survived. Ancestors become ancestors only by virtue of their descendants. *Zunqian ji*'s earliest surviving text is from the manuscript in Wu Ne's compendium, and the source that tries to place it before the 1070s is highly unreliable.

Apart from Feng Yansi's lyrics and a few songs by Li Jing and Li Yu, rulers of the Southern Tang, very little remains from the period between *Huajian ji* and the emergence of Liu Yong, Yan Shu, and Zhang Xian in the first decades of the eleventh century. Only a handful of lyrics survive that are attributed to lyricists from the first half-century of the Northern Song, and many of those lyrics only make their first appearance in the written record very much later. In other words, the practice of song was surely continuous, but the record is not.

Part I of this book consists of two chapters addressing some general issues that will frame our discussion. The first chapter, on "Early Circulation," attempts to piece together the evidence on how a song lyric passed from the lyricist's brush to the fine editions we can now find in libraries. The paucity of sources has encouraged scholars such as Qian Xisheng to organize this topic taxonomically, by the different venues of circulation, rather than historically. I am framing my question as a narrative, and this narrative changed substantially from the earliest collections of individual lyricists made in the third quarter of the eleventh century to collections made a century later. The more difficult question is how those early editions were transmitted and changed before they appeared in the books to which our modern editions trace their ancestry.

Both our direct evidence and the inferences we can make from the problems in the early collections strongly suggest the importance of the

singers in the early stages of transmission. I will discuss the singers, beginning with the mid-twelfth century critic Wang Zhuo's observation that before the Song there were famous male and female singers, but by the Song dynasty this had shifted almost exclusively to female singers.

I will discuss the social system that produced singers, and the differences between the singers in the Entertainment Quarter of the capital and major cities and those in domestic households or on the official rolls. And I will stress throughout the book that the real professionals in music and song were not the male lyricists but the female singers. We see them sometimes competing with a male lyricist in composing or recomposing an existing song to a new tune pattern, and the anecdotal record has plentiful accounts of their skill in this regard. If composition of song lyrics by male lyricists was often "just for fun," the acquisition of a repertoire of effective lyrics was essential for the singers.

We need to understand the singers to revisit the question of the genre's origins in Chapter 2. Here I will review the textual legacy from the Tang and Five Dynasties and offer a hypothesis of how the genre took shape out of Tang poetry. While there were probably many ways isometric classical poetry was sung, we might entertain the possibility that, while the genre's origins are unknown, what we can see is nothing more than a transcription practice.

This hypothesis assumes that song practice was the process later called *yinkuo* 槩括, transforming an isometric classical poem into a heterometric lyric.⁶ If a singer performed a classical poem and the audience, hearing most of the words in the same order, "recognized" it, then that *was* the poem. In the Tang dynasty, classical poems might change textually in song performance but remain notionally "the same." The Song, however, was a scholarly dynasty and required an exact text; by then there was a "poem text" and a "lyric text," rather than a poem and the way the poem might be performed. What we call the "beginning" of song lyric may have been simply writing out the words for the singer to sing to a certain tune. In other words, this was not a new practice, but the textualization of an existing practice. I will close with examples of

6. For a fuller discussion of *yinkuo*, see Chapter 2, "Origins."

how a Wang Wei quatrain could be turned into a much longer lyric, and how the change in form led to a very different aesthetic.

Part II is a series of chapters on songbooks and lyricists representing the early eleventh century to the first part of the second half of the century. The reader will soon discover that one of these lyricists lived in the tenth century, while another belongs to a later generation. But the practice of lyric in the mid-eleventh century is central in both cases.

Having suggested that the proper focus of our attention should be on books rather than authors, I understand that this and the following section may now look disappointingly like a conventional sequence of authors. However, the full textualization of song lyric came as people searched for lyrics by famous authors, and the texts have survived for us in conjunction with those names. As we will often see in the chapters themselves, the relationship between the texts and their putative authors is rarely transparent.

We will begin in Chapter 3 with the *Yuezhang ji* and its elusive author Liu Yong. Although we can say with confidence that he was a real historical person, he is completely unmentioned in *any* contemporary source. Liu Yong is the creature of a rich anecdotal lore and critical comment, all posthumous. Moreover, the critics' judgment of the lyricist and his works in those anecdotes changed over the century after his death. Detailed biographies of Liu Yong's career have been recently written in Chinese, based on the anecdotes and the lyrics, which themselves do not include notices of occasion. These biographies presume that some (but not all) of the anecdotes are factual and that the *Yuezhang ji*, as we have it, is made up of lyrics that are all by Liu Yong, exactly as he wrote them. That would make it unique among lyricists active in the first half of the eleventh century. We know nothing about who made the collection of his lyrics, when it was made, and which sources were used; and we have reason to suspect that the collection grew over time in tandem with the author's changing reputation.

The collection itself is a wonder, entirely unpredictable compared to the existing corpus of earlier and contemporary "short lyrics" (*xiaoling* 小令). Liu Yong's "long lyrics" (*manci* 慢詞) enabled a flow and a range of registers, from the vernacular to the "lofty" style, praising the emperor and his city. In his travel lyrics he created an entirely new descriptive

style, and in this his influence is obvious in the *manci* being written in the 1070s and 1080s. His songs on love in the Entertainment Quarter also had an impact, but they contributed to his “bad boy” reputation, increasing over the course of the first half of the twelfth century. Writing perhaps very early in the twelfth century, Huang Chang compared him to Du Fu; some decades later, in the 1140s, Wang Zhuo called Liu’s lyrics “wild wolf drool,” which according to contemporary folklore caused delusions in those who unwittingly consumed it.

From the Dunhuang finds we know that *manci* was not the creation of Liu Yong and Bianjing in the early eleventh century (though new song music was being constantly composed, both in the palace and the Entertainment Quarter). Elsewhere, in the songbooks, we see primarily *xiaoling*, mostly to old melodies. This was the form then most commonly used at gatherings of officials, both at private residences and during official banquets. These were both easier to compose and perform.

Chapters 4 and 5 treat the *xiaoling* songbooks from roughly the third quarter of the eleventh century. With the exception of the lyric collection of Zhang Xian, which contains a substantial corpus of *manci* from the last years of his long life, 20 to 30 percent of the lyrics in each of these songbooks are attributed to others elsewhere. It is useless in such cases to try to decide whether a certain lyric is by Feng Yansi or Ouyang Xiu. That is to appeal to a connoisseurship that is, in turn, dependent on the stability of a large corpus that can securely be ascribed to a certain author—and there is no such corpus. The alternative is to ask how such a remarkable level of overlap could occur. The answer must lie in the formation of the collection.

There are only two cases from roughly this period in which we have a comment on the sources for a lyric collection, and both are in agreement: the collection was indeed “collected” from diverse sources, and the repertoires of singers were the largest and most accessible source. Did the singers indeed know who wrote the popular lyrics they sang? The ubiquitous multiple attributions strongly suggest that they did not.

A large body of *xiaoling* was in circulation around the mid-eleventh century. They are linked to just a few names. One is, indeed, the tenth-century Southern Tang lyricist Feng Yansi (903–60), whose lyrics

were still performed at parties in the mid-eleventh century. His collection was first made in 1058 by a "gathering" and named *Bright Spring* (*Yangchun ji* 陽春集). This collection includes patently spurious lyrics that are originally from *Huajian ji* (940), court lyrics from the Southern Tang, a few of which share attribution to Southern Tang rulers, and lyrics attributed to mid-eleventh century lyricists such as Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu. Not only are the lyrics from *Huajian ji* clearly spurious attributions to Feng Yansi, they alert us to possible problems with other multiple attributions.

This is an interesting case for the advantage of an approach that focuses on books. *Yangchun ji* is made up of Late Tang lyrics (mid-ninth century), Shu lyrics (before 940), Southern Tang lyrics (after 940), and probably some Song dynasty lyrics from the first half of the eleventh century. From one point of view, it is an anthology spanning nearly two centuries; but it presents itself as the work of a single author, so that its variety is not understood historically, but as "the style of Feng Yansi." The book's place in history is 1058 and not the tenth century. If we could clearly know who wrote which lyric when, we could disaggregate the book—but we cannot know. Its significance is as a repertoire of seemingly "old lyrics" available in the mid-eleventh century.

Another prominent name among *xiaoling* lyricists is that of Yan Shu. Yan Shu stood at the center of the *xiaoling* culture of the early to mid-eleventh century; he was a composer of *xiaoling* and famous for his parties, where the performance of *xiaoling* was part of drinking rituals. He was an admirer of Feng Yansi's lyrics and a patron of Zhang Xian and the younger Ouyang Xiu. Although Yan Shu's *Zhuyu ci* once had a preface by Zhang Xian, our current version does not have that preface and has an only somewhat lower percentage of multiple attributions than *Yangchun ji*, suggesting that the compiler did not really know "who wrote that."

While many of the lyrics in Yan Shu's collected lyrics could (and did) find a comfortable place in *Yangchun ji*, there are some lyrics that trope upon the standard motifs in *Yangchun ji*, which suggests that they are later than the repertoire of "old lyrics"; that is, they treat lyric commonplaces as such. There are also far more convivial lyrics in *Zhuyu ci* than in *Yangchun ji* urging guests to stay and drink.

The two collections preserved under Ouyang Xiu's name not only have a similar problem of multiple attributions, but are also under the shadow of forgery occasioned by the stunned disbelief that the revered "Confucian" Ouyang Xiu could have written the racier lyrics in the collection then circulating. We will examine how the two printed versions construct very different sides of the collection.

Finally, we will consider the long-lived Zhang Xian, whose lyric collection represents both the old *xiaoling* world and the new *manci* for social occasions that become increasingly common in the 1060s and 1070s. This collection also contains multiple attributions, but in a far lower percentage, suggesting not a problem in how the collection was made, but rather the common practice of "supplementing" an existing collection with lyrics that an editor or copyist believed were written by the particular lyricist.

The final chapter in this section, Chapter 6, concerns Yan Jidao, Yan Shu's son. Although he was an almost exact contemporary of Su Shi and thus lived later than the other lyricists in this section, Yan Jidao was deeply engaged with the *xiaoling* world of his father's day. In Yan Jidao's case we have accompanying his collection not one but two contemporary prefaces, one by Yan Jidao himself and one by none other than Huang Tingjian. It seems, however, that the current version of his lyric collection is different, at least from the version of the collection with Yan Jidao's own preface.

Yan Jidao's engagement with the old style in an age in which song lyric was profoundly changing appears as his difference from that very style. Everywhere his lyrics are marked by an intensity, irony, and sense of loss, and frequently refer back to the commonplaces of lyric from the preceding generation.

Part III treats Su Shi (born 1037) and the younger generation of lyricists born in the rough decade between 1045 and 1056. All were active in the last quarter of the eleventh century, and some continued to be active well into the early twelfth century. This was the age when the genre matured, and these lyricists helped set the direction for its future. This was also the age when the genre began to be considered as literature, read as well as sung.

Su Shi brought vast changes to lyric—introducing new topics far outside the scope of the genre as it had been practiced, experimenting with style, and making lyrics credibly biographical by subtitles, prefaces, and specific internal references. His own lyrics largely defeminized the genre. Most of his immediate followers had the good sense not to try to imitate him—one could successfully imitate Su Shi only by being Su Shi. Nevertheless many of these innovations had consequences. Later criticized for writing lyric as if it were classical poetry, Su Shi's work raised an issue that preoccupied subsequent generations. Should the lyricist explicitly integrate his work with the range of occasions in life that classical poetry used? Or should he look for a distinction in style and topics, grounded in music and musicality, that would preserve song lyric "proper" (*bense* 本色)?

In the conviction that indeed Su Shi did not write lyric as if it were classical poetry, I will discuss in Chapter 7 the difference between how he treated a topic in classical poetry and song lyric. We will also look at how he transformed the legacy of Liu Yong, with at least some of whose work Su Shi was clearly familiar.

Song lyric had been an essentially convivial form, used at parties. We will see Su Shi writing lyrics that would be out of place or jarringly inappropriate when performed at a party, such as dreaming of his dead wife. We see that Su Shi's contemporary Yan Jidao did not bother to keep copies of all his lyrics, while Su Shi was sending lyrics to friends and clearly keeping his own copies. Rather than singing, Su speaks of "reciting" (*yin* 吟) lyric texts, using the verb appropriate to classical poetry. He was, in every way, a quirky genius; and there is a strangeness about his best lyrics that is beyond imitation.

Chapter 8, "The Generation after Su Shi," is short overview of the generation born between 1045 (Huang Tingjian) and 1056 (Zhou Bangyan), who grew up when Liu Yong was still the central figure in *manci*. We will take up many of these figures in more detail in the subsequent four chapters, but here I address a number of general issues. For example, as lyric increasingly enters the field of literature, we see the desire to date lyrics and attach them to biographical experience. This is more viable with *manci* that have occasional subtitles than it is with

"song lyric proper," especially *xiaoling*. This practice tends to foreground the datable *manci* at the expense of attention to other lyrics.

Another issue is what might best be called "survival advantage"—or, in negative terms, the loss of certain lyricists' work because of their political affiliations or because their lyrics offended the increasingly moralistic community of the mid-twelfth century. This became a serious problem for understanding the lyricists popular in Huizong's reign. Lyricists with some connection to Su Shi had a distinct "survival advantage." But we will look at Shu Dan, preserved only in *Yuefu yaci* and the third largest selection in that anthology. It is helpful to know that Shu Dan was one of the Censorate figures in charge of the case against Su Shi. Were it not for Zeng Zao, Shu Dan's lyrics would have disappeared entirely.

Before we venture into more interesting lyricists, I use a piece of this chapter to discuss a very mediocre lyricist, Chao Duanli, for whom we have a Southern Song edition. "Mediocre" is my judgment and the judgment of later posterity, but in his last years he was summoned to participate in Huizong's music academy, the Dasheng Fu, and was popular enough to have his lyrics printed in a commercial Southern Song series for popular taste.

In another short chapter, Chapter 9, I discuss some of Su Shi's protégés who did not make it into the canon of important lyricists. Huang Tingjian deserves special attention because he was exceptionally talented and always worked at his craft. Few tried their hand at so many different kinds of lyrics—including "slang" lyrics. In many ways Huang Tingjian exemplifies the cruelty of song lyric as a genre. His success in classical poetry was earned by systematic effort that translated into the "method" he advocated. Song lyric, on the other hand, required perfect but easy phrasing; if it did not come right away, it could never be discovered through diligent effort. Here we also consider Chao Buzhi and Li Zhiyi.

The three chapters that follow—Chapters 10 through 12—introduce the major lyricists of this generation: Qin Guan, He Zhu, and Zhou Bangyan. All three were arguably the most famous representatives of Northern Song lyric during the Southern Song.

Qin Guan developed a reputation as a lover, and such a reputation provides us with some of the best examples of a common phenomenon in the afterlife of a lyric. Later readers often sought what is known as *benshi ci* 本事詞 ("the lyric with the original story behind it"). Only rarely is there reason to credit the particular story or occasion that accompanied a lyric; this practice simply followed from song lyric's gradual transformation to "high literature," biographically grounded. We will look at an example of how a later story tried to construct itself as the explanatory occasion for a Qin Guan lyric and the interpretive problems it created.

In discussing Qin Guan we also have occasion to broach an issue increasingly widespread in this period: a discourse of "sensibility" and its significance. This is a difficult topic because ours is not an age with great sympathy for mannered, intensely sensitive engagement on the part of the lyric speaker with a phenomenon in the external world. Yet why this mode of discourse held such wide appeal deserves some reflection.

One direction such reflection leads us is—perhaps paradoxically—toward explicit markers of artfulness. All the lyricists of this generation grew up in an age when Liu Yong was the predominant figure in *manci*. With the exception of He Zhu, whose extant works are largely *xiaoling*, all engage with and transform Liu Yong's legacy almost beyond recognition. Terms that mark "artfulness" and distancing are essential to this transformation.

In the chapter on He Zhu we must first face the textual anomalies of preservation and ask if these are indeed "anomalies" or if they are a function of He Zhu's popularity and the richness of preserved sources. We have two large versions of He Zhu's "collected lyrics" that overlap by only eight lyrics. Then there is a large anthology selection of his lyrics in *Yuefu yaci*, forty percent of which appears in neither of the two versions of his ostensibly "complete works." After discussing this problem, we will then examine He Zhu's ubiquitous use of earlier poetic material in his own lyrics and his return to Tang *yuefu* models in a much broader way than his contemporaries.

Zhou Bangyan was the only one of our three lyricists who worked entirely outside of Su Shi's circle. His lyrics were virtually (and perhaps entirely) unmentioned in the Northern Song itself, and his rise to prominence seems to have been a Southern Song phenomenon. We will discuss

the vexed question of his position in Huizong's music academy, with which he is usually associated (even though most of his datable lyrics are from the last quarter of the eleventh century, before Huizong's reign).

Zhou Bangyan's song lyric collection survives in two versions, one earlier, larger, and based on a "gathering"; the other, later and smaller, with a commentary. The excluded lyrics are often those that show ties to contemporary lyric practice, while those in the shorter and later version are more "characteristic" of Zhou's distinct style. This leads to the obvious question of whether the excluded lyrics are indeed of dubious authenticity or whether the "characteristic" Zhou Bangyan is an editorial construct.

Zhou Bangyan also raises interesting questions of artfulness and distancing. Wang Guowei associated him with a mode of lyric he called "blocked" (*ge*); and we will see that as Zhou's language becomes increasing ornate, thematically the beloved becomes further and further displaced. These issues, adumbrated in our discussion of Qin Guan, are here taken to an extreme.

Part IV, our final section, will complete the genre's transformation into "literature" in the early twelfth century by looking at lyricists' early sketches of the history of the genre, as well as their growing interest in the beginnings of the genre found in Tang and Five Dynasties song lyric. By the 1140s we find an assessment of the history of lyrics through the Northern Song, culminating in an account of recent lyricists from the first quarter of the twelfth century.

Chapter 13, "Recovering a History," focuses on three accounts of earlier song lyric; these accounts range from between the early 1100s and the 1240s. Probably the earliest is Li Zhiyi's colophon to Wu Ke's collection of lyrics, followed by Li Qingzhao's "Discourse on Song Lyric," and the first part of a long entry from Wang Zhuo's *Biji manzhi* of 1149, with Wang Zhuo clearly responding to Li Qingzhao's "Discourse." In the comparison of the three we see not only different positions, but also some fundamental changes in the assessment of the earlier canon over the course of the half-century that separates them. One of the most important changes was the return of Tang and Five Dynasties lyrics and of the *Huajian ji*.

Chapter 14, "The Last Generation of the Northern Song and On," attempts to sketch the lyricists of the new generation, mostly born in the 1070s and 1080s, who rose to prominence in Huizong's reign. The record is too thick to treat here in detail. Instead we will look at the rest of Wang Zhuo's long entry on Northern Song lyric and comment on a few of the names he mentions. The modern Chinese literary historian of song lyric might object that Wang Zhuo's account is skewed. It seems, rather, that he truly represented the temper of his time—keeping in mind his age was the age when works were preserved or not, put into print or not. And we will see that those he treated with bland praise often survived, while those he disapproved of but named as the most prominent in their day survive only in fragments, those fragments filtered by the interests of the sources that preserve them.

This brings us to Li Qingzhao, whose work also survives only partially, filtered by those same sources. After Ronald Egan's magisterial monograph, I cannot add much. I confine myself largely to Wang Zhuo's comments, which both praise her poetic talent in the highest terms and condemn the morality of her lyrics in the strongest terms. If the modern reader cannot find in Li Qingzhao those qualities Wang Zhuo condemned, it is important to remember that Wang Zhuo had more of her work to read than we do, and that the sources in which her lyrics are preserved for us would not have selected such lyrics.

I am not arguing for a witty and bawdy Li Qingzhao—though I am sure someone with her talent could have done it. Rather, at the end, I return to the point made at the beginning. "Authors" are part of literary history (including the now nameless singers who may have composed some of our favorite lyrics). But interesting and messy processes intervene and control what we now see. Somehow, through it all, works of rare beauty survive.

I

Setting the Stage

ONE

Early Circulation

Before the last two or three decades of the eleventh century, song lyric had not yet become even marginally legitimate as "literature," but it was a recognized performance genre, widely practiced in social situations. Judging from early comments, lyrics seem to have been known primarily individually, rather than through collections or anthologies. Around the last quarter of the century we begin to have comments on a particular lyricist's "work"—but we do not know how widely the person making the comment knew the lyricist's work, and we do not know whether the works were read or heard. There seem to have been a few collections of individual lyricists in circulation, but it was not yet a world in which such collections, books purporting to represent a lyricist's "work," were common.

The relationship between what a lyricist first wrote, how his works were gathered into early collections, and what we find in our modern editions is rarely a simple one. We will try to use our small and imperfect evidence to trace the route of a song from its composition to a book we can access.

We have some scenes of composition in eleventh-century lyric. In "Yu hudie" 玉胡蝶 ("Jade butterfly"), Liu Yong 柳永 meets an old love, who takes him into the bedroom:¹

1. Tang Guizhang 1999, 51–52; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 184.

親持犀管，旋疊香牋。要索新詞，殢人含笑立尊前。

She herself held out the horn brush in hand,
then folded the scented notepaper.
She demanded a new lyric of me,
teasing me with a smile
as she stood there by our cups.

She then sings the lyric, and the couple goes to bed. Since she is a private singer, a “new lyric” by Liu Yong adds to her capital; it is an exchange of services. This is an exceptional situation, rather than the norm; but what is not exceptional is the scene of writing.

One of the tropes of mid-century *xiaoling* is the scene filled with melancholy after the party is over. Into the lyric “Po zhenzi” 破陣子 (“Breaking through the ranks”), Yan Shu 晏殊 (991–1055) inserts the scene of composition:²

多少襟懷言不盡，寫向蠻箋曲調中。此情千萬重。

So much feeling, it can't all be spoken,
written out in the song melody on fine notepaper.
Such feeling in thousands of layers.

Again we have the notepaper, with lyrics that will re-appear at some future party as “new lyrics” to an old tune. Here we must take *yan* 言 (“to speak,” “to be spoken”) as ordinary language that fails such complex emotions. Instead of the ancient bursting into song, emotion is “divulged” (another sense of *xie* 寫) in “writing out” (*xie*) in the fixed form of song lyric. The writer knows the melody, knows in some way how it would sound, and the written text is destined for the trained singer, who will give the words adequate voice.

The normative scene, however, is best described in Yan Jidao's 晏幾道 (1038–1110) preface to the 1089 collection of his lyrics, made by his friend Fan Chunren 范純仁 (1027–1101), Duke of Gaoping. Here Yan Jidao describes a general scene of composition, a nostalgic memory of parties with old friends who have passed away:

2. Tang Guizhang 1999, 111; Zhang Caoren, 15.

始時，沈十二廉叔、陳十君龍，家有蓮、鴻、蘋、雲，品清謳娛客，每得一解，即以草授諸兒。吾三人持酒聽之，為一笑樂而已。

At the beginning, Shen Lianshu, twelfth in his generation, and Chen Junlong, tenth in his generation, had in their households the singing girls Lian, Hong, Pin, and Yun, who would sample unaccompanied songs to amuse guests. Each time I "got" a new stanza, I would give a copy of it to them, and the three of us would listen to the song as we drank—just for fun.³

Xiaoling were short and easy. Yan Jidao would think up a stanza, then immediately write it down (the term *cao* 草 implies hasty writing, a draft) and give it to the singers. The grand question in these cases is what happened next, between the scribbled lyric handed over to a singer and its later appearance in a collection of song lyrics.

The only unambiguous answer to this question also comes in Yan Jidao's preface. After his two friends passed away, the household singers dispersed to other employers.

昔之狂篇醉句，遂與兩家歌兒酒使具流轉於人間。自爾郵傳滋多，積有竄易。七月己巳，為高平公綴輯成編。

Those wild stanzas and drunken lines drifted about in the world along with the singers and wine stewards of the two households. From that time on, these songs were transmitted at greater and greater degrees of remove, and textual errors accumulated. Then on the day *jisi* of the seventh month, the songs were assembled and placed in order by the Duke of Gaoping.⁴

Here it is the "singers and wine stewards," perhaps present when the lyrics were first composed and performed, who are the initial stage of transmission. And we should keep in mind that the singer had to *read* the text and memorize it in order to perform it.

From numerous internal references in lyrics themselves, we know that parties could go on for a long time. *Xiaoling* were short, and singers would have needed an extensive repertoire of brief lyrics to sustain the

3. Ashmore, 231.

4. Ashmore, 231.

merrymaking.⁵ Changes in a patron's office or his fortunes or his death often dispersed troupes, whose members would take their repertoires and move on to new employment.

As "new lyrics" became, through repetition, old lyrics that passed from singer to singer, we may legitimately wonder if those later singers knew just who had composed the lyric. We will return to this issue when considering the striking percentage of multiple attributions in the early *xiaoling* collections. Yan Jidao did not mention misattributions, but he was struck by the degree to which the lyrics themselves had changed in serial re-performance. This may have been due to his own faulty memory, but more likely singers felt free to change the lyrics they performed to suit their own tastes or the tastes of their guests.⁶

The most striking question regards Fan Chunren's sources for his texts of Yan Jidao's lyrics. It is within the realm of possibility that he got them from Yan Jidao himself, but it would have been exceedingly unusual for a friend to make such a collection during the lyricist's own lifetime and then to give the collection back to the author himself for a preface. Yan Jidao's description of the casual moment of composition, the account of variation in transmission, the title given the collection (*Filling in Missing Yuefu* [Yuefu buwang 補亡]), and finally, in a passage not translated above, Yan Jidao's memories stirred by reading the lyrics all suggest that Fan Chunren's sources were the versions of the lyrics circulating in performance.⁷ In other words, it was exactly as Yan Jidao says: he scrib-

5. It is possible that they memorized lyrics from oral performances by other singers in a troupe, but with the singers being to some degree literate, it seems a distinct possibility that troupes had written repertoires. Chen Zhensun 陳振孫 mentions a 986 anthology, now lost, with the delightfully descriptive title *Collection for Household Banquets* (*Jiayan ji 家宴集*), made up of Late Tang and Five Dynasties lyrics. Chen Zhensun, 615.

6. This finds a negative reflection in an anecdote about Yan Shu, who was at a parting banquet before he took up a regional posting near the capital (postings close to the capital were a sign of imperial favor). The singer sang a conventional lyric about parting for a "thousand leagues," and Yan Shu angrily interrupted that he had never been posted farther than five hundred leagues. Tang Guizhang 1986, 131. This is a mid-twelfth century anecdote in Wu Zeng's *Nenggaizhai manlu*, so there no reason to credit its historical veracity; but a good singer would be careful to avoid or change what might give offense or be considered inappropriate.

7. See Ashmore for the associations of *buwang*, "filling in what was missing." Ashmore develops Yan Jidao's own account of the term, but I am suggesting a play on Yan Jidao's

bled out lyrics, gave them to the singers, and that was the end of that until they came back to him through Fan Chunren's efforts.

It we take this as the norm for lyric collections before the age of Su Shi, then—barring such a unique case when a lyricist had the opportunity to see a collection of his own lyrics made by such a gathering—we have a world of shifting texts and authorship intervening between the moment of composition and the early collections of a lyricist's works. This began to change dramatically in the last decades of the eleventh century. Yan Jidao's dashing off of lyrics "just for fun" was being replaced by aficionados, especially in the Su Shi circle, who exchanged lyrics with each other and composed them for performance on literati occasions. Yan Jidao was a close contemporary of Su Shi, but he represented an earlier age, as Su Shi represented a new one. Around the turn of the twelfth century, in addition to the Yan Jidao preface cited above, we find a lyric collection presented by the author (He Zhu) to a prominent friend for the purpose of writing a preface, and we also see someone (Huang Chang) commenting on reading Liu Yong's collection of lyrics. The evidence is slight, but it suggests the increasing textualization of song lyric in authorial collections. When we have evidence of a collection of song lyrics circulating in the late eleventh century, however, we know that in at least some cases it is not the same collection that survives today.

The anomaly in the early history of song lyric is *Huajian ji* from 940. We can say with some confidence that we have this in pretty much the same state it was when first produced.⁸ This anthology seems to have come into general circulation—or attracted interest—in the late eleventh century and was printed in the Southern Song. The *Huajian ji* and the *Jiayan ji*, mentioned earlier, are the only extant "books" we know of devoted to song lyric before the mid-eleventh century.⁹ Both are anthol-

explanation of the term. Judging from his preface, this may not have been seen as a complete collection of Yan's lyrics, but rather a partial collection from one period or venue.

8. I offer this as a relative judgment. Chao Qianzhi's 1148 colophon follows one Nanjing copy, which he judges as better than others, which are, in turn, described as full of "errors."

9. Wen Tingyun's 溫庭筠 *Jinquan ji* 金筌集, which survived into the Song, may have been *Huajian ji*'s source for Wen's lyrics, but because it was in three fascicles and was probably mined by the *Zunqian ji* editor to supplement Wen's *Huajian ji* selection, it must have contained other types of writing as well. I will address Chen Shixiu's claim that there

ogies, and the latter seems to have been a songbook for current use. The *Huajian ji* was clearly a literary production, with a finely written preface in defense of the genre. This is not to say that there might not have been others; we simply do not know of them with any certainty.¹⁰ Apart from individual lyrics, often attached to anecdotes, written circulation of song lyrics seems to have happened on a much smaller scale, like the thirty-three lyrics preserved among the Dunhuang manuscripts under the title “Yunyao ji” 雲謠集, or like Pan Lang’s 潘閔 (d. 1009) eleven short reclusive lyrics to the tune “Jiuquanzi” 酒泉子, the current version evidently derived from an early stone inscription of them.

Our first surviving “book” of song lyrics after *Huajian ji* is Chen Shixiu’s 陳世修 edition of *Yangchun ji* 陽春集 (or *Yangchun lu* 陽春錄), by his maternal grandfather (or great-grandfather) Feng Yansi 馮延巳 (903–60). Chen’s preface is of considerable interest: I translate the parts that refer to the song lyrics.

南唐相國馮公延巳，乃余外舍祖也。公與李江南有布衣舊... 公以金陵盛時，內外無事，朋僚親舊，或當燕集，多運藻思，為樂府新詞，俾歌者倚絲竹而歌之，所以娛賓而遣興也。日月寢久，錄而成編。觀其思深辭麗，韻律調新，真清奇飄逸之才也。... 及乎國已寧，家已成，又能不矜不伐，以清商自娛，為之歌詩以吟詠情性，飄飄乎才思何其清也。核是之美，萃之於身，何其賢也。公薨之後，吳王納土，舊帙散失，十無一二。今采獲所存，勒成一帙，藏之於家云。大宋嘉祐戊戌十月望日，陳世脩序。

Feng Yansi, the minister of the Southern Tang, was in fact my grandfather on my mother’s side.” He had old ties with the [ruling] Jiangnan Lis since the time they were commoners. . . . When Jinling was at its height and there were no problems domestic or foreign, he would join colleagues and intimates at banquets where he exercised his rhetorical panache and composed new lyrics for *yuefu*. He had singers sing them following the music of strings and woodwinds, by which he delighted his guests and

was a lost Feng Yansi collection shortly. It is possible—though I think unlikely—that the *Zunqian ji* was written in the tenth or eleventh century.

10. In the Five Dynasties, He Ning 和凝 was supposed have printed his own literary collection in over a hundred fascicles. He was also known for his song lyrics (Qian Xisheng, 219). This, however, does not indicate that he published his song lyrics as part of his literary collection.

11. Probably his great-grandfather.

expressed his feelings of the moment. As the days and months drew on, he recorded them and compiled them in a book (*bian* 編). When I observe the depth of his thoughts and the beauty of his language, along with the fresh euphony in rhyme and tune pattern, [I know that] he was truly a remarkable and untrammelled talent. . . . When the kingdom was at peace and the family established, he was able not to boast of his accomplishments, but to delight himself with the “clear *shang*” notes and make them into songs (*geshi* 歌詩) to chant his feelings (*yinyong xingqing*). After he passed away and the King of Wu [Li Yu] surrendered his territory, the old scroll-cases were scattered, with not even ten or twenty percent surviving. Now I have collected what survives and copied them into a scroll, and keep it in my family.

—A preface by Chen Shixiu, the *wushu* year of the Jiayou Reign of the Great Song (1058), the first day of the tenth month.

This is the first extant preface to a song lyric collection after the preface to the *Huajian ji*, almost one hundred and twenty years earlier, and it appears in a radically different cultural milieu.¹² It is also the first compilation of the song lyrics of an individual. How can Chen Shixiu justify compiling a collection of song lyrics? First, the proper task of a son or filial descendant was to edit the works of his father or ancestor and to provide it with a preface.¹³ He states the family relation in the very first line. Second, he defends his ancestor against conventional charges that he failed in his ministerial duty in the “decadent” Southern Tang court and spent his time writing song lyrics. He repeats the claim that Feng Yansi wrote such songs only when the kingdom was at peace and there were no pressing problems. He calls the song lyrics *yuefu* (later the polite way to refer to song lyrics), then “songs” (the term *geshi* places them in a standard classical poetry collection), assigning them one canonical function of classical poetry, “to chant his feelings” (*yinyong xingqing*). Finally, he assures his readers that he decorously keeps the collection at home—though we know that it was circulating more widely within a

12. I do not count here Pan Lang's preface to his “Jiuquaizi” series. (Tang Guizhang 1999, 6).

13. At a time when song lyric was reasonably respectable, this enterprise of Chen's would have been a clear affront to the patriline Feng clan, who should have borne this responsibility. See Appendix A: “The Manuscripts of Feng Yansi.”

few decades, with the consequence that Chen Shixiu's preface has been preserved with the collection. He is clearly referring to a manuscript.

Defenses of the song lyric genre do appear commonly in later prefaces. Chen seeks to assimilate Feng Yansi's usually amorous song lyrics into a standard poetry collection. Two other aspects of contemporary culture may further contextualize this act. First, there was, from decades earlier in the eleventh century, an immense nostalgia for the Southern Tang, its history and its surviving artifacts. Second, this was the period when scholars began to edit Tang literary remains on an unprecedented scale. Wang Zhu's edition of Du Fu had been completed in 1039 and would be published in print for the first time by his son in 1059, a year after Chen Shixiu's preface.

In the preface Chen Shixiu claims that his edition was all that remained of a much larger edition made by Feng Yansi himself. We do not know on what basis Chen could make such a claim, whether on credible information or mere inference. Several points should be noted. First, the large collection of which only a small percentage survived was a contemporary Song bibliographical trope that gave the surviving texts a distinct aura. Second, Chen did not say that Feng Yansi compiled a "collection" (*ji* 集), because if he did so, he would have had to give it a name—and he obviously could not. Chen used the term *bian* 編, perhaps suggesting here a private gathering, rather than a formal collection for circulation. But if Feng Yansi had indeed compiled his collected songs—which I doubt—it would have been the first example of an individual collection.¹⁴

Chen Shixiu tells us that he himself "collected what survives" (采獲所存), which tells us that he had to seek the lyrics out where he could find them and did not have a single privileged source. This, in turn, brings us to the most important question: where did he get his texts?

The question is important because Chen's *Yangchun ji* duplicates song texts from *Huajian ji* as well as song lyrics also attributed to authors still alive when Chen wrote his preface. Since such multiple attributions are particularly common in song lyrics before Su Shi and Yan Jidao (and common enough thereafter, just not to the same degree), it seems not

14. See note 9 on *Jinquan ji*.

unlikely that other individual collections of song lyric—none of which can be attested earlier than 1058—were first made in a similar fashion. This means that there was not a simple base text made by the author or anyone else who knew what the author wrote. Rather, someone later “gathered” song lyrics that were, in some venue, attributed to that author, as we saw in the first Yan Jidao collection.

One further caution is necessary. The fact that we commonly have the same lyrics appearing under two or more famous names in extant collections does not mean that those are the *only* lyrics that may not be by the author assigned in a particular collection. We see, rather, a question of authorial magnetism. In the third quarter of the eleventh century, when the initial versions of some collections were probably taking shape, there were a limited set of famous names to which one could attribute a lyric: Feng Yansi, Li Yu 李煜 (937–78), Yan Shu, Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–72), or Zhang Xian 張先 (990–1078) for *xiaoling* (short lyrics), and Liu Yong for *manci* (long lyrics). These lyric collections may have a majority, perhaps even an overwhelming majority, of lyrics composed by the author—the problem is that, with a few exceptions, we cannot credibly judge which ones. At the same time there was probably more seepage of lyrics by unknown authors into the famous collections than is usually acknowledged.

This puts a different light on some issues, such as the “slander” theory that enemies composed risqué lyrics under Ouyang Xiu’s name to blacken his character.¹⁵ In 1045 Ouyang Xiu was accused of having had illicit sexual relations with his sister’s stepdaughter before her marriage. A scandal of this magnitude, involving a rising star in politics and culture, probably invited not so much purposeful composition to defame, but rather attribution of an existing lyric with “a wink and a nod.” In the same way, when someone heard a long lyric about the Bianjing Entertainment Quarter, “who else” could have written it but Liu Yong? Because all our anthologies are from the Southern Song, it is hard to distinguish an anonymous Northern Song lyric from a Southern one, but there are not many anonymous lyrics that seem to belong clearly in the eleventh-century *xiaoling* tradition. This, in effect,

15. Egan 1984, 177ff.

means that attribution of authorship was a survival advantage for an eleventh-century lyric.

Perhaps the best answer to the question of where Chen Shixiu found his texts can be found in the *Nan Tang erzhu ci* 南唐二主詞, compiled in the second half of the twelfth century and printed in 1208. This is a much smaller collection, with only thirty-seven lyrics, but it contains many notes on sources.¹⁶ Some of these lyrics were preserved in manuscripts in various households, and it is likely—considering the contemporary antiquarian passion for Southern Tang “cultural materials” (*wenwu* 文物)—that Chen Shixiu found some of his texts this way. Other lyrics have either no notes on sources or cite “remarks on poetry” (*shihua* 詩話) or miscellanies (*biji* 筆記), raising the question of where the authors of the remarks on poetry and miscellanies got their texts. In 1058, when Chen Shixiu wrote his preface, there were no *shihua* (except perhaps for Ouyang Xiu’s) and few Northern Song miscellanies—none of which cite Feng Yansi’s lyrics. As is the case with the later remarks on poetry and miscellanies, the real source seems to be the memory of various literary men. We are now entering a tenuous chain of textual transmission when dealing with the lyrics of Feng Yansi.

To gather up a remembered lyric here or there was one way to proceed, but it would have been a laborious way to build a rather large collection. The easier way was to draw on the sizeable repositories of the song tradition that were everywhere—from the singers themselves. Called on to provide an unending stream of different songs, sometimes on a daily basis, the singers had to have extensive repertoires. One trope that appears in anecdotes about a literatus recalling a song was that he remembered a few lines but forgot the rest of the song (this is often reported by someone who claims to have found the rest of the lyric). The singer did not have this luxury.

The term Chen Shixiu uses for “collect” is *caihuo* 采獲 (“amass by collecting”). The term *cai* in this context has a rich history. It is the term used in one account of the compilation of the *Shijing*, in which the Zhou court sent out officers among the people to “gather” (*cai*) songs. This same term was used to account for the anonymous *yuefu* attributed

16. Bryant 1994, 307–12.

to the Han, lyrics that were supposedly “gathered” by the Han Music Bureau (Yuefu). Especially from the early ninth century on, it returned as an ideal for poetry that was socially engaged. In this context it is important to keep in mind that song lyric was still thought of as *yuefu*. “Collecting” such lyrics from singers had a cultural resonance that was legitimizing (though trained singers were far from the imagined villagers in the theory of collecting the poems of the *Shijing* and *yuefu*).

Such “collecting” is relatively straightforward with anonymous songs; but when seeking works by a particular “author,” it becomes problematic, assuming singers even knew or cared about the author of a good song. The problem with singers was a tendency to attribute a lyric to a famous name and a lack of concern about the scholarly accuracy of the attribution. The largest collection, that of Liu Yong, is also the collection for which the repertoires of singers seem a particularly likely source. Remembering a short *xiaoling* would have been relatively easy for the literati; remembering a long *manci* was another thing altogether. And Liu Yong’s was the only famous “name” on which to hang a *manci*.

New lyrics were always welcome, but old lyrics were the staple of the repertoire—especially if they had been composed by someone famous. Su Shi has a beautiful version of “Mulan hua ling” 木蘭花令, “following the rhymes of Ouyang Xiu on West Lake” 次歐公西湖韻.¹⁷

霜餘已失長淮闊。空聽潺潺清潁咽。
佳人猶唱醉翁詞，四十三年如電抹。
草頭秋露流珠滑。三五盈盈還二八。
與余同是識翁人，惟有西湖波底月。

In the last of the frost I have already lost sight of the long
Huai River in the distance.
I hear only the gurgling of the clear Ying.
The fair woman still sings the lyrics of the Drunken Old Man,
forty-three years is like a flash of lightning.
Autumn dew on the plants, glossy with rolling droplets.
The fifteenth of the month it was bright and full, and then the sixteenth.
Of those who knew the Old Man as I did,
there is only the moon in the waves of West Lake.

17. Tang Guizhang 1999, 364; Zou and Wang, 699.

This was a fine moment in 1091, when the great Su Dongpo visited Yingzhou, where Ouyang Xiu, the "Drunken Old Man," lived out his last years. Ouyang Xiu's sequence of lyrics (*lianzhang* 連章) on "West Lake" in Yingzhou must have survived textually because it still retains the parallel prose "presentation" (*nianyu* 念語) that was to be read out before the performance.

The local singer—no doubt knowing the immense fame of Su Shi and his association with Ouyang Xiu—pulls an Ouyang Xiu lyric out from her repertoire. Su Shi "recognizes" it, which is not necessarily to say that every word she sings matches the text Su Shi had heard or read (if he had indeed read or heard the lyric before), nor is it necessarily what Ouyang Xiu had written.

Singers, furthermore, could do more than memorize a large repertoire. As so often is the case, in Liu Yong's lyrics we get a glimpse of another one of their skills—composing lyrics. The lyric is to "Xichun lang" 惜春郎.¹⁸

玉肌瓊豔新妝飾。好壯觀歌席，潘妃寶釧，阿嬌金屋，應也消得。
屬和新詞多俊格。敢共我勦敵。恨少年、枉費疏狂，不早與伊相識。

Marble flesh, alabaster charms, just made-up and adorned.
Quite a stunning sight at the singing party.
Consort Pan's precious bracelet,¹⁹
Ajiao's gilded chamber—²⁰
she deserves them.

In matching recent lyrics her style is quite splendid.
She dares to try to best me.
I regret my youth,
wasting my wildness for nothing,
and that I had not earlier known her.

Of course, it is not surprising that many of those singers, the real professionals of song, could compose. So where did all *their* songs go? If some-

18. Tang Guizhang 1999, 26; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 56.

19. The consort of the last Southern Qi ruler.

20. Young Han Wudi declared that if he could get Ajiao, a young woman to whom he was attracted, he would keep her in a gilded chamber.

one asked, "Who wrote those lyrics?" and the singer answered, "I did," it is a near certainty that both she and her lyrics would be politely ignored.²¹ But if she answered instead "Feng Yansi" or "Liu Yong," the lyrics might be remembered and written down, and might even be preserved in the collections of song lyrics circulating at the time.

The song lyric collections of Liu Yong, Zhang Xian, and Ouyang Xiu contain compositions for social occasions that are indisputably by the "author." Probably all the early collections have many or even a majority of songs that are, in some sense, "by the author"—although the practice of singers modifying written texts for singing, so common later, may have occurred here too.²² Apart from those texts that we can tie to a lyricist and a time, we simply do not know exactly who wrote them or when; and in a more profound sense, it does not matter. When we enter the age of Su Dongpo and Yan Jidao, we have entered an age of "authorship" in a different sense. Yan Jidao considered many of the lyric texts in the collection made by Fan Chunren as having "textual errors." For all his insouciance regarding the preservation of his lyrics, Yan Jidao is still implicitly claiming a proprietary relation to the texts he wrote. Such changes were, however, common enough in oral and manuscript transmission; they may have been made purposefully, to create a better song, or to adapt the song to the immediate circumstances of performance—including variations made to avoid giving offense.

If we know hardly anything about how song lyric collections were formed and how they were initially transmitted into the Southern Song, the general situation of Northern Song lyric in the Southern Song is nothing short of bewildering. We see extensive knowledge of and numerous comments on Northern Song lyric; but apart from some prefaces, we know remarkably little about how Northern Song lyrics were circulating in the early Southern Song.

Chinese scholars generally assume printed editions of song lyrics existed in the late Northern Song. This may be true, but I have seen no credible evidence. The earliest actual evidence I can find is Chao Qianzhi's 晁謙之 1148 colophon on the printing of the *Huajian ji*. Soon

21. The exceptions are lyrics by singers preserved in anecdotes, and these are all later.

22. See Appendix B: "Lyrics Adrift."

after that we have Zeng Zao's 曾慥 1151 colophon on an imprint of Su Shi's song lyrics. In the colophon Zeng Zhao speaks of finding more lyrics after the blocks were carved. In the same year Wang Anshi's 王安石 (1021–86) collected works were printed, with his song lyrics included. Although there may have been earlier imprints, the mid-twelfth century seems to have marked a threshold when filial descendants, later disciples, and admirers began to print editions of song lyric collections and include them in the "complete works" of prominent predecessors.²³

The problem lies in the sources for those first imprints. Although in classical genres we can often trace a clear lineage from a Song author to the extant printed text, with song lyrics this was not the case. In printing song lyrics the editors had to use what they could find. I have every confidence that the lyrics in the 1151 edition of Wang Anshi "probably" had a reliable source, but in most cases of other collections, sources seem to have been of varying reliability. Whenever we have two imprints of different Southern Song editions of a lyricist, or a Southern Song imprint and a later imprint that can credibly be traced back to a Southern Song edition, it always creates more problems than it solves.

Received collections and anthologies have been supplemented by lyrics quoted in "remarks on song lyric" (*cihua* 詞話), such as Wu Zeng's 吳曾 *Random Notes from Able-to-Change Studio* (*Nenggaizhai manlu* 能改齋漫錄). They cite authors and correct "misattributions" with the assured authority that is the voice of the critical genre, but we have no idea of the basis for such claims. Unless they heard it from a friend or a singer, the existence of such "supplements" to received editions must mean that these critics saw a different version. All we know is that even

23. I do not discount the possibility that there were printed editions—and most likely, cheap commercial editions—of lyricists' work in the last third of the eleventh century and the first quarter of the twelfth century, with the probability of the existence of such imprints growing over that long interval. In this period, however, a printed edition was the marked term; by the thirteenth century a manuscript edition was becoming the marked term. And in the few references we have to collections, they are not marked as "printed." For example, in his 1180 preface for his gathering of Zhou Bangyan's 周邦彥 lyrics, Qiang Huan 強煥 is explicit that this will be printed "to give a long lifespan to its circulation" (以壽其傳). Jin Qihua, 68. The earliest explicit reference I have found to a commercial imprint of song lyrics is Zhou Kan's 周刊 1173 colophon to the lyrics of Zhou Zizhi 周紫芝. Jin Qihua, 106.

after the mid-eleventh century, there is a far higher proportion of lyrics attributed to more than one person than in Song or even Tang classical poetry.

A major issue here is the relation of a song lyric's circulation in song, in manuscript, and in print, and the stability of manuscript versions, which served as the basis for print versions. Chinese textual studies are almost exclusively focused on print versions, but any scholar of the bibliography of Song dynasty lyrics knows how many texts were preserved in Ming and Qing manuscript versions. Many of these manuscripts were based on printed versions, now lost (or supposedly so); but it is worth keeping in mind that every printed version of Northern Song lyrics was based on a manuscript tradition. This is not the same thing as the family possessing a manuscript copy of Ouyang Xiu's classical literature and having it printed. By the Southern Song we begin to find some lyricists who were exercising control over their lyric collections, but there is little evidence of this in the Northern Song before Huizong's reign.

When we look at the colophons and prefaces from the Ming and Qing when Song lyric collections were being edited, we often see striking variations in the size and content of editions and manuscripts. Compilers had a strong tendency to add lyrics from other editions to a base edition, thus producing an edition that was "more complete." This speaks to the greatest problem in Northern Song song lyric: the "drift" in adding and dropping lyrics. Much of this drift probably came not from the initial version of the collection, but from lyrics that someone claimed were by a certain lyricist or "sounded like" the work of that lyricist. Alternatively, some lyrics may have sounded like they "should not have been written" by a certain lyricist—the Ouyang Xiu case being, as we will see, the outstanding example.

In Zeng Zao's preface to his anthology *Yuefu and Lyrics in the High Style* (*Yuefu yaci* 樂府雅詞), we have a precious image of an aficionado's library of song lyric in 1146:

予所藏名公長短句，裒合成篇，或後或先，非有詮次，多是一家，難分優劣。涉諧謔則去之，名曰樂府雅詞。九重傳出，以冠於篇首，諸公轉踏次之。歐公一代儒宗，風流自命，詞章幼眇，世所矜式。當時小人或作艷曲，謬為公詞，今悉刪除。凡三十有四家，雖女流亦不廢。此外又有百

餘闕，平日膾炙人口，咸不知其姓名，則類於卷末，以俟詢訪，標目拾遺云。紹興丙寅上元日，溫陵曾慥引。

I have assembled the heterometric lyrics by famous men that I have in my library into a book. Some are earlier and some are later, but there is no orderly sequence. Most are distinctive authors in their own right, so that it is hard to distinguish who is better.²⁴ I removed those that involved rascally wit, and named it *Yuefu and Lyrics in the High Style*. I took what was transmitted from the palace as the first works, followed by *zhuantu* lyrics by various gentlemen.²⁵ Ouyang Xiu was the leading Confucian of his generation, but he considered himself to have romantic panache. His song lyrics were wonderfully fine, and the age took them as a model. At the time unscrupulous fellows composed erotic songs and falsely attributed them to Ouyang Xiu. I have excised all of these here. In all there are thirty-four authors, and women writers have not been excluded. In addition to these, there are also over a hundred lyrics that people have always loved, but the names of the authors are all not known;²⁶ I have put these together at the end, under the heading "Appendix," and await further investigation.

—The fifth day of the fifth month of the *bingyin* year of the Shaoxing Reign (1146), a note by Zeng Zao of Wenling.

This preface deserves some careful attention. First, we take the work as an "anthology," but the preface doesn't quite say that; it says only that Zeng excluded only those lyrics involving rascally wit (probably referring to vernacular lyrics, which often include irreverent and risqué lyrics) and the morally dubious lyrics of Ouyang Xiu.²⁷ Indeed, Zeng explicitly denies making judgments on relative quality (難分優劣). Since Zeng Zao did an edition of Su Shi's lyrics five years later, when compiling *Yuefu yaci* he may have not yet acquired Su Shi's lyrics, or he may have already had a copy but did not consider them *yaci* ("lyrics in the high

24. This comment could also be translated as referring to the lyrics themselves: "[in each case] it is hard to distinguish which works are better."

25. *Zhuan* was a performance genre involving an improvised classical poem recast as a song lyric.

26. I have taken the reading in the SBCK edition rather than *Wenxian tongkao*'s reading of 或 here. The fact that many of the authors have been provided in the current text is easily explained by Zeng Zao's invitation to aficionados that follows.

27. The standard alternative to "lyrics in the high style" (*yaci*) was, at the time, not "rascally wit" (*xiexue* 諧謔), but "the voluptuous" (*cayan* 側艷).

style"). Likewise he may have had a copy of Liu Yong's *Yuezhang ji* but would not have included it.²⁸ We need to consider the possibility that the contents of *Yuefu yaci* were indeed what Zeng Zao had in his library, minus the explicit exclusions.

When we compare the lyricists in Zeng Zao's "anthology" with the famous lyricists listed in Li Zhiyi's 李之儀 (1048–1118) colophon to Wu Ke's 吳可 collection of lyrics from over a half-century earlier, we find they overlap in only two names.²⁹ By contrast, Zeng Zao's anthology is far more consistent with the long list of judgments on famous lyricists in Wang Zhuo's 王灼 (1105–75) *Random Notes From Emerald Cock Ward* (*Biji manzhi* 碧雞漫志) dating to 1149 and based on notes written in 1145.

These are the three fascicles of *Yuefu yaci* with the number of lyrics for each lyricist included:

I

Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–72)	83
Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–86)	13
Chao Buzhi 晁補之 (1053–1110)	28
Li Yuanying 李元膺	8
Zhang Xian 張先 (990–1078)	12

II

Zhou Bangyan 周邦彥 (1056–1121)	29
Chen Guan 陳瓘 (1057–1124)	19
Xu Fu 徐俯 (1075–1141)	17
He Zhu 賀鑄 (1052–1125)	46
Shu Dan 舒亶 (1041–1103)	48
Ye Mengde 葉夢得 (1077–1148)	55
Zhao Lingzhi 趙令畤 (1061–1134)	22
Wang Anzhong 王履道 (1075–1134)	19
Chao Duanli 晁次膺 (1046–1113)	19
Chao Chongzhi 晁沖之	13

28. Zeng Zao would have known Moqi Yong's 萬俟詠 division of his collection into *yaci* ("lyrics in the high style") and *cayan* 側艷 ("the voluptuous"). See Wang and Yue, 35. Presumably the latter would have been excluded with "rascally wit."

29. See Chapter 13, "Recovering a History."

III

Chen Yuyi 陳與義 (1090–1138)	18
Su Xiang 蘇庠 (1065–1147)	23
Li Qi 李祁	14
Lü Benzhong 呂居仁 (1084–1145)	19
Mao Pang 毛滂 (1060–1124)	12
Zeng Yu 曾紆 (1073–1135)	9
Li Jia 李甲	8
Xiang Ziyin 向子諲 (1085–1153)	14
Xie Yi 謝逸 (d. 1113)	22
Zhu Dunru 朱敦儒 (1081–1159)	19
Shen Wei 沈蔚	16
Chen Ke 陳克 (1081–1137?)	36
Zhao Zifa 趙子發	10
Cao Zu 曹組 (one date, 1121)	31
Lady Wei 魏夫人	10
Li Qingzhao 李清照 (b. 1084)	23

The first thing we notice is the heavy concentration on lyricists who were active during the half-century before the composition of *Yuefu yaci*. This is hardly surprising. It may, however, be surprising how little this assemblage of lyricists resembles current canon. We must make allowances for the element of chance in the acquisition of a lyricist's work. This was not yet the age of the printed set of the late Southern Song *Lyrics by a Hundred Masters* (*Baijia ci* 百家詞). Yan Shu and Yan Jidao are missing; but the most shocking absence is perhaps that of Qin Guan 秦觀 (1049–1100). One might imagine a prejudice against Su Shi's closest associates, but in the first fascicle there is, improbably, Chao Buzhi.

If Zeng Zao was indeed including what he had in his library, minus the lyrics that were not *yaci* ("lyrics in the high style"), the most significant thing we notice is the relatively small size of his manuscript collection (and the size makes it likely that all these lyricists, with the possible exception of Ouyang Xiu, were represented by full manuscripts). There are many cases where the preservation of all or a large part of the extant works of a lyricist depends on *Yuefu yaci*. With the famous lyricists, however, what we see here would look like a "selection." The exception

is Ouyang Xiu; if we add the lyrics of his that were excluded by Zeng Zao, we get a collection comparable in size to the extant Ouyang Xiu lyrics.

The easiest explanation for this is that lyrics in this period were still not generally circulating in "complete" collections but, like the earlier Tang poetry manuscripts, circulated in selections shaped by taste, popularity, and accidental encounters with additional texts. The large addendum to *Yuefu yaci* tells us that lyrics were also circulating singly, in pairs, or in groups of three (on a single sheet of paper), both with and without the lyricist's name (reading *huo* 或 for *xian* 咸).³⁰

We see a similar phenomenon in the earliest anthology of Song dynasty lyric, Huang Dayu's 黃大與 *Plum Garden* (*Meiyuan* 梅苑) from 1129. Of its 412 lyrics on plums, 260 are anonymous. As with Zeng Zao, this suggests a broad circulation of individual lyrics or sets without names attached.

Zeng Zao's addendum includes lyrics without prose paratextual material, such as accounts of the original occasion (*benshi ci* 本事詞), judgments, and comparisons with other lyrics—the brief comments that seem to have accompanied lyrics circulating in isolation or small sets. Yang Shi's 楊湜 *Gujin cihua* 古今詞話, apparently from the early Southern Song, survived into the Ming and has been partially reconstituted from quoted entries with paratextual information.³¹ This work is, quite properly, seen as an early example of "remarks on lyric" (*cihua* 詞話).³² Most interesting, however, is the proportion of lyrics by unknown authors to lyrics by known authors, which is similar to the contents of Zeng Zao's library.

Moreover, the recovered entries from *Gujin cihua* include lyrics both with and without paratextual material, making the form an intermediary between anthology and collected critical commentary. This is very similar to a contemporary compilation, Ji Yougong's 計有功 (*jinshi* 1121) *Tangshi jishi* 唐詩紀事 in eighty-one fascicles. The lost *Fuya geci*

30. See note 26 for the sources of these readings.

31. Tang Guizhang 1986, 13–54. Several of the entries are taken from the second series of Hu Zi's *Tiaoxi yuyin conghua* of 1167, which gives us a *terminus ante quem*.

32. To this we should add Yang Hui's 楊繪 *Shixian benshi quzi ji* 時賢本事曲子集 from the Northern Song, whose fragments are collected in Tang Guizhang 1986, 3–12.

復雅歌詞 by an unknown compiler styled Tongyang jushi 銅陽居士 seems to have been another work in this intermediary form between anthology and "remarks on lyric."³³ *Fuya geci* seems to have been another early Southern Song compilation of fifty fascicles with over 4,300 lyrics supposedly representing song lyric up to the Xuanhe reign (1119–25).

We find ourselves on an interesting margin between oral and written transmission. In 1146 Zeng Zao wrote of having miscellaneous pieces of popular lyrics (without authors given) in his library. In 1149 Wang Zhuo rewrote notes he had made from oral discussions that occurred in 1145. We are in a world where the written text seems to reappear in oral discourse, and oral discourse is recreated from memory in writing.

Zeng Zao's collection was made during the radical transformation of song lyric circulation in the middle of the twelfth century, when song lyric entered print with increasing frequency, culminating in the large compendia of song lyric from the end of the twelfth century into the thirteenth century.³⁴ Although in Zeng Zao's work some collections, such as Ouyang Xiu's lyrics, were already circulating widely in larger versions, during this time the printing of lyric collections was generally just beginning. Two years after *Yuefu yaci*, we have the earliest extant imprint of *Huajian ji* in 1148, along with the first series of Hu Zi's 胡仔 *Collected Comments from the Fisherman Recluse of Tiao Creek* (*Tiaoxi yuyin conghua* 苕溪漁隱叢話), with a fascicle devoted to song lyric. The next year, 1149, saw the completion of Wang Zhuo's critical work on song lyric, *Biji manzhi*, based on comments first written in 1145, followed by Wu Zeng's *Nenggaizhai manlu* in 1154–57, with a long section on song lyric. From 1151 we have Zeng Zao's colophon on an addendum to Su Shi's lyrics, referring to an already printed edition. Mid-twelfth century critics of song lyric were probably working with a textual base that looked far more similar to the song lyrics in Zeng Zao's library than to the larger editions that followed.

33. Tang Guizhang 1986, 59–63. Ma Xingrong 1996, 392, gives the dates 1151–54 for *Fuya geci*'s compilation. The small number of citations makes it hard to generalize, but they do mix lyrics with and without paratextual material. Wu Xionghe discovered the preface; see Wu Xionghe 1999, 90ff.

34. These compendia include the *Qinqu waipian* 琴趣外篇 series, the *Dianya ci* 典雅詞, the *Baijia ci* 百家詞 (roughly 1208), and the *Liushijia ci* 六十家詞 of the late Southern Song.

Preparing an edition was a more serious enterprise.³⁵ Both Chao Qianzhi's preface to *Huajian ji* and Zeng Zao's own addendum to Su Shi's song lyrics speak of comparing various editions, so both men seem to have had access to relatively full versions. As we will see later, when Luo Bi 羅泌 prepared his scholarly edition of Ouyang Xiu's song lyrics, he excluded the lyrics he considered morally suspect and hence inauthentic, but he also supplemented the remaining collection with "newly found" lyrics, so that the size of the collection does not seem significantly smaller than the original base collection.³⁶

However troubled we might be by the criteria for inclusion and exclusion of lyrics in the proto-scholarly formation of lyric collections in this period, in a wider sphere the process of making a collection seems to have changed little since Chen Shixiu's compilation of Feng Yansi's lyrics. I suggested earlier that lyrics seem to have been circulating primarily in "small collections," represented by Zeng Zao's library. Zeng Zao offers only twenty-nine lyrics by Zhou Bangyan. A fuller collection awaited 1180. Its compiler, Qiang Huan 強煥, describes the process in his preface. Serving as a local official, Qiang Huan had observed the fondness for Zhou Bangyan's lyrics among the people of Lishui 麗水, where Zhou had served as magistrate.³⁷ One manifestation of popular affection was the practice of having singers always perform Zhou Bangyan's lyrics first at parties. There is no hint of doubt about the singers' versions, and these certainly were an important part of his "gathering," a surviving trace of Zhou's good governance that was to be celebrated through making the collection. Qiang writes: "I wanted to extend the townspeople's thoughts in loving him, so I compiled his song lyrics; I sought near and far and got only 182 lyrics" (余欲廣邑人

35. This was the case at least for official editions and privately sponsored editions. The editorial principles for commercial editions are less clear, and we are still heavily dependent on the remains of the large commercial series.

36. See "Ouyang Xiu and His Collections" in Chapter 5, "The Xiaoling Collections (II)."

37. Sun Hong, 500. Since Qiang Huan was a local official at the time, this is considered an "official edition" (*guanke* 官刻). The only earlier *guanke* of song lyric were made as part of complete editions, first of Wang Anshi's collected works in 1151, then of Huang Chang's literary collection in 1166 and of Qin Guan's literary collection in 1173. Chao Qianzhi's *Huajian ji* of 1148 was also a *guanke*. Qian Xisheng, 215–17.

愛之之意，故哀公之詞，傍搜遠紹，僅得百八十有二章）。³⁸ This is the earliest extant printed edition, surviving in Mao Jin's 毛晉 (1599–1659) copy (though “corrected”), and it contains many more lyrics than the preferred 1211 Chen Yuanlong 陳元龍 edition.³⁹ When we look at the text of the 1211 edition, however, it shows little significant textual variation from the 1180 edition. If the 1211 edition were based on a different source text or represented an independent “gathering,” then we would expect many more textual variants (at least as many as we find between the *Yuefu yaci* collection and the 1180 edition from Qiang Huan). We must conclude that the 1180 edition was the base text for the 1211 edition.

Herein lies the problem: when editions of song lyric are made by one person's “searching far and wide,” they draw from the world of the small collections circulating among aficionados, not to mention lyrics on single sheets (perhaps with paratextual supplements) and the repertoires of singers. Working under the principle that “more is better,” these editors give us all the attributions (lamenting “I . . . got *only* 182 lyrics”). Moreover, after eighty years of invisible dissemination there was no way for someone to judge what was authentic and what was not. So the edition based on laboriously “searching far and wide” easily becomes the base text.

Each collection must be judged by its own history. Those that survive in only one early source text may be relatively “stable,” but it is a stability behind which stand the same problems of transmission. We are speaking of editions of Northern Song lyrics. The issue is *not* whether there is or is not a Song edition as the basis for later editions and manuscripts; the issue is what that Song edition itself was based on. And where there are multiple Song editions and lineages, there is often wild variety.

By the turn of the thirteenth century, song lyric largely belonged to print culture—though we should not disregard the continued involvement of the manuscript, which seems to have played a far larger role in the textual transmission of song lyric than it did with classical genres. These late Southern Song printed editions are, by and large, the extant

38. Zhang Qihu, 68.

39. See the discussion in Chapter 12, “Zhou Bangyan.”

"Song editions" (which often survive in traced reprints) as well as the editions that were the basis of later manuscript copies.

We know that men were not usually singing these lyrics. Manuscripts and sheets with lyrics certainly must have been passed back and forth, along with lyrics transcribed from male recitation. But the women singers were always there. From Su Shi's lyric on hearing Ouyang Xiu's lyrics being sung, to Qiang Huan's listening to the singers in Lishui, the women singers were invested with the aura of preserving lyrics from the near past.

The Singers

In his 1149 *Biji manzhi*, Wang Zhuo offers an entry under the heading, "Among the Ancients, Those Who Became Famous for Singing Made No Distinction between Men and Women" 古人善歌得名不擇男女. After giving a long list of famous singers, both men and women, from the Warring States through the Tang, he continues with disapproval: "Nowadays people value only a woman's voice and no longer consider whether she is skilled or not. Moreover, in the song lyrics composed by gentlemen, they also favor seductive gentleness, and the old sense of how things should be is gone!" To prove his point he cites an anecdote about Li Fangshu 李方叔, active in the late eleventh century. Li Fangshu was introduced to an old man skilled in song. In response Li composed a lyric to "Pinling" 品令:⁴⁰

唱歌須是玉人，檀口皓齒冰膚。意傳心事，語嬌聲顫，字如貫珠。
老翁雖是解歌，無奈雪鬢霜須。大家且道是伊模樣，怎如念奴？

For singing a song you have to have a woman like jade,
ruby lips, gleaming teeth, skin like ice.
To convey the sense of what's in the heart,
words charming, the voice tremulous,
the syllables like pearls on a string.

40. Wang and Yue, 26–27.

Although this old fellow understands song,
 you can't do anything about his snowy locks and white beard.
 Everyone will think that looks like his
 can't compare with a Niannu.⁴¹

We do find some comments on men singing lyrics, but these first appear late in the eleventh century and are so few that they are clearly interesting exceptions to the norm.⁴²

Toward the end of the eleventh century we begin to find references to various terms of "reciting" or "intoning" (*yin* 吟) song lyrics; and, as we will see, in that period we begin to find lyrics whose subject matter would have been inappropriate for performance. This purely "literary" reception of song lyric became increasingly widespread in the twelfth century. Performance in song, however, continued and was notionally the appropriate form for lyric. Reading out song lyrics was considered much less interesting. In ranking the quality of a series of situations, *Zazuan xu* 雜纂續, attributed to Wang Junyu 王君玉, makes this judgment: "Flavorless: reciting song lyrics" (冷淡:念曲子).⁴³

In his long list of singers, both male and female, from antiquity through the Tang, Wang Zhuo is referring to those who were so famous that their names were preserved. The norm of performance, however, was a more widespread social practice among the elite, a practice requiring a large and steady supply of attractive young women trained in song from a young age. Here, as in many things, the institutional scale in the Tang seems to have been small compared with that in the Song.

These women singers were part of an unlovely system that has been

41. A famous woman singer of the Tang.

42. See Tan Xinhong. I thank Ronald Egan for pointing the article out to me. Wang Zhuo must have read Li Qingzhao's "Discourse on Song Lyric," which begins with a fanciful anecdote about the Tang, when a famous male singer was brought in disguise to a party for *jinshi* graduates. After the famous women singers of the day had performed for the young men, the man who brought the male singer suggested that he sing. The audience was hostile, but once he opened his mouth, the *jinshi* graduates were overwhelmed with amazement and admiration. Li Qingzhao's parable of men and women crossing gender roles is lost on Wang Zhuo.

43. Qu Yanbin, 64. See also Bossler, 8. There were two people called Wang Zhi 王錚, evidently the given name of Wang Junyu. One lived in Renzong's reign (1023–63), and the other lived in the Shaoxing reign (1131–62). See Qu Yanbin, 189–90.

well studied by Beverly Bossler.⁴⁴ Song China, like other Chinese dynasties, had a class system with significant legal ramifications. Commoners were not at the bottom; members of the bottom group were the "degraded" (*jian* 賤). This group included members of certain professions (including entertainers), those that were effectively slaves (the more generous translation would be "bondsmen" and "bondswomen," though they could be bought and sold), and, significantly, the families of those convicted of a crime. There were other groups classified as *jian*, but the three mentioned above were numerous enough to staff this most peculiar political institution. Singers on the government rolls and payroll were "official singers" (*guanji* 官妓), for the entertainment of men holding civil offices, and "camp singers" (*yingji* 營妓), for men holding nominally military offices. Girls and young women were impressed to serve as "singers" (*ji* 妓). The modern meaning of *ji* as "prostitute" is inappropriate; "entertainer" is better, with her primary duties being to perform music and to accompany officials at banquets and at engagements involving drinking. Since they had little power and since the lyrics they sang so often contributed to an erotic ambiance, they often became the sexual partner of a banquet companion. Another situation Wang Junyu characterizes as "flavorless" was to "leave the party without a singer" (無妓逃席).⁴⁵ Some modern scholars have tried to downplay the sexual aspects of this institution, focusing entirely on their skills as singers. These skills were, of course, important; but they contributed to the desirability of the singer. One does not need to read far in song lyric to realize that such skills were part of the larger presentation of dress, beauty, and manner, all of which contributed to the courtship game. The government sometimes issued edicts forbidding sexual relations with these singers, but the edicts were repeated often enough to make it clear what the norm was.

On the domestic level there were "household singers" (*jiaji* 家妓) who were part of the general commerce in human beings to staff elite households, except in those cases when they were bought off the government rolls by officials. Probably in most cases they were bonded

44. See Bossler, "Shifting Identities," 5-37.

45. Bossler, 8.

for a term by parental sales and trained domestically. Since these singers performed at household banquets, the general sexual availability of such singers probably varied from one household to another.

The most interesting case is that of the private *ji*, especially those in the entertainment quarters of the great cities. Simple prostitutes were not called *ji*. We don't know where the elite *ji* came from; most likely they were indentured by their parents at a young age and stayed in the profession until they made a good marriage (to a merchant, as convention has it) or became "madams" who purchased and trained their own girls.

Among the private *ji* at the top, performance skills probably played a role far closer to what scholars have assumed was the general case. These were "stars," and their prestige was itself a power that could negotiate with male social power. Because everyone wanted them, they could say no.

Beverly Bossler's foregrounding of the characterizations of behavior in the *Zazuan xu* is invaluable in letting us understand the rules of the game. To "force one's way into the gate after not having been chosen by a singer is a case of the "Shameless."⁴⁶ The woman's right of refusal was—with no reference to the kind of singer—part of the code of behavior.

The striking distinction between the bonded singers of the state and the great families, and the private *ji* as artistic and sexual entrepreneurs, was also, to some degree, a division of genres of song. Initially the bonded singers of state and households largely sang *xiaoling* ("short songs"), which by their very name were associated with drinking rituals (*jiuling* 酒令). These were mostly old tunes that everyone knew. In the entertainment quarter of the capital, there was a proliferation of much longer songs, the *manci*, often to new tunes and very different in manner, mirrored by the constant production of new melodies and lyrics for court entertainment. The *xiaoling* were easy for a singer; the *manci* were hard and probably required considerable training to perform well.

The social gendering of song practice had interesting consequences. The themes of songs before the age of Su Shi were largely about the romantic attraction and attachments between men and women. Sometimes in

46. Qu Yanbin, 53; Bossler, 8.

the textual voice of a man, sometimes in the textual voice of a woman, sometimes ambiguous, such songs were associated with femininity. The self-consciously contrary move in Su Shi produced a kind of lyric that was marked as "masculine," the voice of a "man's man." Su Shi imagined a group of strapping lads as appropriate for singing one of his lyrics.⁴⁷

In reality, however, a woman singer was needed. The most famous of Su Shi's later followers, Xin Qiji 辛弃疾 (1140–1207), was even more militantly "masculine" in some of his lyrics than Su Shi; yet we know, on reliable report, that when he composed some of his most famous lyrics, he would invite friends for a drink and have the lyrics performed by a woman singer.⁴⁸ We must imagine his righteous revanchist rage needing the gentle voice of a young woman singer to be realized. At this moment we can see the earlier culture of song performance, with its strong sexual undercurrent, contrasted with the singer as a gender-neutral performer. If Xin had simply read the songs out to his friends it would have been . . . "flavorless" (冷淡).

47. See Chapter 7, "Su Shi," under the heading "Su Shi and Liu Yong."

48. Tang Guizhang 1982, 305.

TWO

Origins

Histories of Chinese song lyric generally begin with the appearance of some of the familiar tune titles in the palace repertoire of the mid-eighth century, and proceed into the problematic relation between "song lyric," as it came to be understood, and the practice of Tang song. We see this desire to establish continuity very clearly already in Wang Zhuo's *Biji manzhi*, most of which is devoted to tracing the history of tunes. From references to Tang songs and music, histories of the genre move into the surviving examples of "Tang and Five Dynasties lyric" before at last turning to the Song. There are good reasons to reconsider this procedure, both in terms of the sources and the assumptions made.

As is the case with eleventh-century song lyric, we should consider the sources and their implications. In this period we also need to keep in mind the difference between the practice of song and textual transcription. No doubt there was a continuous practice of song from the Tang into the eleventh century—though such practice may have varied through time and by venue and region. The transcription and textual transmission of songs is something else, which may or may not accurately represent song practice. Moreover, we should pose the question whether a song was always transcribed as it was sung in the Tang and whether a text was always sung as it was written. Asking this question offers a useful way to begin rethinking Tang song lyric.

Our earliest textual source is a considerable corpus of song lyrics contained in the Dunhuang manuscripts. These were, of course, not discovered until modern times and not available to the song lyric tradition. They do, however, give us a glimpse of the range of popular song lyric, always with the proviso that Dunhuang was on the margins of Han culture and we cannot know how widespread its practices were. We have one short "anthology," generically entitled "Yunyao ji" 雲謠集, consisting of thirty-three lyrics in a somewhat more elevated style than most other Dunhuang song lyrics. What is most interesting for our purposes is that a majority of the lyrics were preserved in small groups or isolated texts, representing a sheet or two of paper, and sometimes on the backs of other documents. The single sheet was probably the most common mode of circulation of song lyric, and we still see it in the compilation of the addendum to Zeng Zao's *Yuefu yaci* and in the notes on sources in the compilation of the *Nan Tang erzhu ci* in the twelfth century. It is unclear why the secular Dunhuang lyrics were written down—perhaps it was because of "the scribe's boredom," which is the reason why precious fragments of early Irish lyric have also been preserved.

In the song lyric tradition before the Dunhuang discoveries, knowledge of Tang and Five Dynasties song lyric depended on three books and anecdotal citations of lyrics, whose credibility diminishes in proportion to their distance from the Tang and Five Dynasties. The first source is the one fully reliable source, *Huajian ji* with its 940 preface by Ouyang Jiong 歐陽炯. The sixty-six lyrics in *Huajian ji* written by the Tang poet Wen Tingyun 溫庭筠 had a credible textual source in Wen's *Jinquan ji* 金荃集, which survived into the Song. We don't know the provenance of the twelve lyrics by Huangfu Song 皇甫松, also a purely Tang poet writing around a century before the *Huajian ji*. The *Huajian ji* also contains forty-eight lyrics by Wei Zhuang 韋莊 (ca. 836–ca. 910), who had given up his post in the crumbling empire and fled to the separatist regime in Chengdu. For Ouyang Jiong, Wei Zhuang represented the older generation in Chengdu. The rest of the lyrics are roughly contemporary with the compilation, and most were by courtiers in Chengdu. Not until the twelfth century will we find a book of song lyrics of such textual credibility.

The second source is Chen Shixiu's *Yangchun ji*, discussed in the preceding chapter. The best we can say here is that an unknown proportion of the collection certainly represents the Southern Tang.

The third source is *Zunqian ji* 尊前集, clearly compiled after the *Huajian ji*, since it generally does not include works that were already anthologized in *Huajian ji*. The *Zunqian ji* survives in the early Ming *Baijia ci*, without a preface or a compiler. If we discount the one mention in one version of the supposed Cui Gongdu 崔公度 colophon to Feng Yansi's lyrics, it is invisible until the twelfth century.¹ *Zunqian ji* is a very strange text, beginning with three Tang emperors, followed by the "Li Prince" 李王, the proper Song reference to Li Yu 李煜 but a shocking sequence in the Song, which did not consider the ruling Lis of the Southern Tang legitimate successors of the Tang.² Then in the middle of the anthology the "Li Prince" returns with more lyrics, which precede seven lyrics by Feng Yansi, and he reappears once again later, after Feng Yansi. Feng Yansi himself appears twice, earlier with three lyrics, after which the anthology moves back in time to Wen Tingyun. It seems like two anthologies or acts of collecting sutured together, but even that does not explain its unique peculiarities in Song anthology-making.

In a more richly documented textual field, a scholar would immediately place such an anthology in limbo. But scholars depend on this anthology almost exclusively for Tang lyrics before the Five Dynasties, going beyond Wen Tingyun and a handful of lyrics by Huangfu Song. As we have no idea who compiled it and when, we cannot even guess the provenance of its texts.

Even without a preface, the anthology's purpose is clear: both to supplement *Huajian ji* and to provide the genre with a Tang ancestry (including many Tang isometric verses whose titles gesture to song lyric, but would not usually have been considered song lyric in the eleventh century). Its compilation suggests it appeared at a time after the *Huajian ji* had returned to general circulation and aficionados had become interested in the history of the form: this would place it in the first half of

1. See Appendix A: "The Manuscripts of Feng Yansi."

2. To begin an anthology with works by rulers seems the most natural thing in the world to a late imperial or modern reader, but the earliest extant example is the organization of *Tangshi jishi* 唐詩紀事 by Ji Yougong 計有功, compiled in the early Southern Song.

the twelfth century. It is, however, possible that it was made in the early Song and entered general circulation with the renewal of interest in *Huajian ji* and Tang lyric.

To our three substantial sources we should add the *Nan Tang erzhu ci* 南唐二主詞, probably compiled in the second half of the twelfth century and printed in the early thirteenth century. This comes primarily from earlier sources, and the intense scholarly desire to have the lyrics of Li Yu has led to a general dismissal of the many alternative attributions of lyrics in the collection.

In short, the histories and anthologies that give us a continuous story of song lyric from the Tang through the Five Dynasties into the Song are on exceedingly fragile ground. The Five Dynasties has ample material, but the Tang account, apart from the *Huajian ji* material, is far from certain. At a certain stage in the genre, aficionados wanted a story of ancestry. The *Zunqian ji* gives material for such a story, and that material has been continuously recycled to serve such a need.

Many literary historians of song lyric have noticed the half-century hiatus in its "history" after the founding of the Song dynasty. The issue is not the practice of song lyric, but its textual transmission. Songs generally appear in texts from a century or more after their supposed date of composition. Some are credible; some seem quite improbable.

If we take a hard look at the Five Dynasties after *Huajian ji*, it is difficult to find evidence of songs circulating textually. To say this is not to disbelieve that the compiler of *Nan Tang erzhu ci* might have seen a lyric or two of Li Yu's in autograph, or that Cheng Shixiu might have used some texts copied from Feng Yansi's originals. The only evidence we have for general textual circulation is the lost 986 anthology *Collection for Household Banquets* (*Jiayan ji* 家宴集), made up of Late Tang and Five Dynasties lyrics. And the title tells us clearly that such an anthology was for practical use and not for the literary reputation of whichever lyricists' names were attached to the songs included.

Therefore, I am here treating the "origins" of song lyric not as the historical background of Song dynasty lyric, but rather as a body of texts—of different degrees of credibility—entering the history of Song dynasty lyric as it matured toward the turn of the twelfth century and looked to find a past for the genre.

Up to this point I have been considering the standard story of the early history of song lyric, trying to distinguish its certainties and uncertainties. Now I will revisit the topic on the level of speculation. Scholars of Chinese literature often feel uneasy with speculation; they want to prove something with certainty. But when extant information is inadequate, the effort to “prove with certainty” often results in distorted scholarship.

Instead, as in the sciences, I will offer a hypothesis. A good hypothesis is the simplest way to answer a question or a related set of questions. In science one tests a hypothesis by experiment. In the case of song lyric, we do not have the data to prove or disprove the hypothesis, so it must stay on the level of hypothesis.

A good hypothesis looks for fallacies in people’s assumptions, especially those based on anachronism. Potentially the most serious anachronism in the assumptions made in the standard account of Tang lyric is the identity of song practice and written text. This is the assumption made when song lyric reaches the age of scholarship and high literature beginning in the mid-twelfth century.

Here we need to consider the work of Ren Bantang 任半塘, whose *Tang shengshi* 唐聲詩 (roughly *Voiced Poems of the Tang*) assembled a significant corpus of isometric poems to known song lyric titles, many of which have anomalies in tonal regulation. Ren argues strenuously that these cannot be sung to the song lyric patterns as we know them, but there are two problems with that argument. First, it presumes the stability of a melody over time. More important, it assumes that the written text and the words as sung were roughly identical.

The hypothesis is this: the written text and the text as sung were not expected to be identical; all that was necessary was for people to be able to “recognize” the classical poem in the song. In other words, what we call “song lyric” (*ci*) is a change in transcription practice, writing out the words as they were sung or as the author wanted them sung. This seems to have begun around the middle of the ninth century. The corresponding transcription practice before the eleventh century would be to take a song, or a passage from a song, and transcribe it as isometric. To offer an example on the simplest level: the last line of Li Yu’s “Yu meiren” 虞美人 is 恰似一江春水向東流 (“It’s just like a whole river of springtime water flowing to the east”). In a prose anecdote it is quoted as 一江春

水向東流 (“A whole river of springtime water flowing to the east”). The vernacular *qiasi* 恰似 (“it’s just like”) naturalizes the “poetic” line, voices it: it is the simile of the “speaker” as subject, rather than the metaphor of the author. That is one aspect of the “difference” of song lyric. That difference is so beguiling that it is no wonder literary men began to write that difference into the text.

Another way to state this hypothesis is that song lyric began with the practice of *yinkuo*, taking an isometric poem and adapting it to a certain tune. We know that singers, as well as literary men, could do this.

The modern scholar of song lyric will perhaps be troubled by this, wondering how the tonal patterns of a classical poem could be reconciled with some of the elaborate patterns of many song lyric tunes. However, so long as one gives the singer liberty, requiring only that the poem be “recognized,” it is easy. Here we find a good example in perhaps the most often sung classical poem of the Tang. Sometime before the An Lushan Rebellion, Wang Wei 王維 composed a quatrain for one Mr. Yuan, second in his generation of his branch of the Yuan family, seeing him off on a journey to the remote northwestern frontier territory of Anxi, the “Western Region.” We do not know the exact date of its composition, nor can we identify Mr. Yuan, but we do know that it was written for a particular moment and a particular person. Neither Wang Wei nor Mr. Yuan knew that it would become one of the most famous poems in the language, “Sending Off Mr. Yuan to Anxi” 送元二使安西.

渭城朝雨浥輕塵，客舍青青柳色新。
勸君更盡一杯酒，西出陽關無故人。

By the walls of Wei City the rain at dawn dampens the light dust,
all green around the guest lodge, the colors of willows revive.
I urge you now to finish just one more cup of ale:
once you go west through Yang Pass there will be no more old friends.

This is how the poem appears in Wang Wei’s collected works, composed for a particular person at a particular moment. By the end of the eighth century, however, the poem had become a repeated song, used generally at parting banquets. Everyone still recognized that it was written by Wang Wei, but Mr. Yuan, second in his generation, was forgotten. “Wei City”

came to stand for anyplace pleasant where the parting occurred, while "Yang Pass" stood for any remote destination for which the person was leaving. As the song lyrics became generic, its title too became generic, either "The Song of Wei City" ("Weicheng qu" 渭城曲) or "The Song of Yang Pass" ("Yangguan qu" 陽關曲). In becoming repeated song, it lost its historical specificity; and the feelings implied, while no less intimate, took on a different flavor in the awareness that they were *always* sung again on the occasion of parting.

In the hands of Bai Juyi 白居易 we see the song used for an occasion of much diminished gravity—not for a friend leaving for the dangerous wastes of Central Asia, but simply to persuade a friend to stay and have another drink, in "Facing Ale" ("Dui jiu" 對酒).

相逢且莫推辭醉，聽唱陽關第四聲。

Having met, don't now just decline to get drunk,
listen to the fourth voicing of Yang Pass being sung.

Bai Juyi's "fourth voicing" apparently refers to the song version known as "Yang Pass with Three Repeats" ("Yangguan sandie" 陽關三疊). By the Northern Song there was some uncertainty as to precisely what this meant. We may imagine inebriated gentlemen telling the official entertainer to sing "Yang Pass with Three Repeats," and the singer repeating the quatrain three times or singing every line three times. Su Shi triumphantly claimed that he saw an old score showing that the "three repeats" were repetitions of the second through fourth lines,³ thus yielding a satisfying explanation for Bai Juyi's "fourth voicing." In Su Shi's version, the fourth line would be "I urge you now to finish just one more cup of ale," corresponding to Bai's "Having met, don't now just decline to get drunk."³ We do not know if Su Shi's "old score" actually represented Tang song practice—or if it did, whether it represented the *only* version of Tang song practice.

3. Su Shi himself composed three versions of "The Song of Yang Pass" (Tang Guizhang 1999, 401), which are simply regulated quatrains, like Wang Wei's original. There is a *manzi* titled "Yang Pass in Three Variations" by Chai Wang 柴望, a lyricist of the thirteenth century (Tang Guizhang 1999, 3834).

Song was part of banquets, in the Tang with quatrains and later with *xiaoling*. The padding of "Yang Pass with Three Repeats" was one way to draw it out. The *Cai Kuanfu shihua* 蔡寬夫詩話 speaks of using added phrases (*hesheng* 和聲): "Singers take the words and layer them with added phrases to complete the tones" (歌者取其辭與和聲相疊成音耳).⁴ These *hesheng* were written into some of the lyrics of Huangfu Song from the ninth century.

We have no strong reason to doubt these accounts, but at the same time we cannot assume that these were the only ways in which a poem could be sung. We should note, however, that Song dynasty critics selected accounts of Tang song that preserved the integrity of the isometric line. This was not at all the case in the Song practice of *yinkuo*.

We do have one very interesting survivor, attributed to the early Northern Song poet Kou Zhun 寇準 (961–1023), in *Tiaoxi yuyin conghua*.⁵ It looks like what we would expect from the practice of *yinkuo*. This has the tune title "Lay of Yang Pass" ("Yangguan yin" 陽關引), and it is the only set of lyrics to this tune, which may suggest that this is a version of "Yangguan qu" 陽關曲.⁶

塞草煙光闊，渭水波聲咽。春朝雨霽輕塵歇。征鞍發。
指青青楊柳，又是輕攀折。動黯然，知有後會甚時節。
更盡一杯酒，歌一闕。歎人生，最難歡聚易離別。
且莫辭沈醉，聽取陽關徹。念故人，千里自此共明月。

Light in mist, far and wide over frontier grasslands,
the sound of waves chokes in the Wei River.
A spring dawn, the rain clears, the light dust stops.
The traveler's saddle sets out.
I point to the green of the willows,
once again they are casually snapped.
All at once it is gloomy,
and we wonder what the time will be for a future meeting.

4. Cited in Hu Zi 胡仔, *Tiaoxi yuyin conghua qianji* 茗溪漁飲叢話前集 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1962), 140.

5. Hu Zi cites his source as the *Lanwan qubui* 蘭畹曲會, by Kong Yi 孔夷 (better known by his courtesy name Fangping 方平). Kong Yi's dates are unknown, but he was a recluse in the Yuanyou reign, which makes this relatively early.

6. Tang Guizhang 1999, 4.

Now finish just one more cup of ale,
 and sing a song.
 I sigh for human life,
 the hardest thing is joyous gatherings, parting comes easily.
 Don't now refuse getting very drunk
 and listen to "Yang Pass" all the way through.
 I brood on my old friend,
 from now on across a thousand leagues we share this bright moon.

This is *yinkuo*: the song contains virtually all the words of Wang Wei's quatrain in the same order. Is this a literary amplification of Wang Wei's quatrain, or is it a musical adjustment, writing it down in a way in which Wang Wei's quatrain might have been sung to a longer melody that requires a deflected tone in the rhyme position?

Since the song makes an unmistakable allusion to the Bai Juyi couplet cited earlier, this may well be the work of a literary man; there is no reason to doubt the attribution to Kou Zhun outside of the utter unreliability of attributions of song lyrics in this period.⁷ It still, however, may be the mimesis of the practice of singers.

Our hypothesis suggests that the origin of *ci*, song lyric as a textual genre, may be traced to a change in transcription practice, writing down songs as they were sometimes sung. This has two moments. In the Dunhuang manuscripts we seem to have scribes writing down songs as they were actually sung. In the *Huajian ji* we have a second moment: contemporary literary men writing down songs as they *wanted* them sung, perhaps emboldened by the Tang precedent of Wen Tingyun. "Lay of Yang Pass" should cast a new light on the old objection that the pattern of level and deflected tones, and the frequent use of deflected tone rhymes, means that song lyrics could not grow out of regulated quatrains (requiring level-tone rhyme). Isometric poetry might have been sung isometrically on some occasions (and the formal requirements of regulated poetry do not leave much room for many tunes), but a quatrain could also be broken into pieces and set in a song. "Lay of

7. I say "may be the work of a literary man" because in lyric we often find that what seems to be an allusion to a particular earlier source often turns out to be a commonplace in song lyric, so often reused that it had long forgotten its source.

Yang Pass" may be an exception in early texts, but it may have been one norm of song practice.

Our assumption involves certain constraints. The singer begins with a fixed isometric text that she frames and quotes. Indeed, the singer depends on the pleasure of recognition when the audience hears the familiar words in the right order. The singer has liberty to delete and change some things, so long as the audience recognizes the primary text.

The changes worked on the words of Wang Wei's quatrain in "Lay of Yang Pass" cover a full range of types of transformation, consistent with the way in which lyricists used lines and passages from Tang poetry in the eleventh century. Wang Wei's poem has *Weicheng* ("Wei city"); the Kou Zhun version has *Wei shui* ("the Wei's waters"). The singer needed a deflected tone, *shǔ*, where the classical poem had a level tone, *chéng*. The "Wei's waters" are right by "Wei City," so the place is still named. Wang Wei's version has, "I urge you now to finish just one more cup of ale"; the Kou Zhun version omits "I urge you" (*quan jun*), but it is implicit.

Wang Wei uses *yì* 浥 (moisten). Every listener knows the quatrain and knows the word; but it is not a word often used in earlier song lyric. The song lyric rephrases the idea using *xié* 歇, a word that occurs often in song lyric.

The most interesting change is at the end. Wang Wei's persuasion to drink just one more cup of ale is strengthened by a harsh warning, "Once you go west out Yang Pass there will be no more old friends." Song lyrics often prefer more commonplace consolations; Kou Zhun's song lyric ends not with a threat, but with a commonplace promise of sharing the moonlight. Most of the words are there, enough to make it easily recognized, but the verbal gesture is completely transformed.

The old words of the poem have been "framed," and that act of framing is both inherent in the transformation of the isometric quatrain into a longer song in irregular lines and a completely new aesthetic. It is tempting to call the new aesthetic "ironic," because it creates a gap between the speaker and what is said, between the song and the poem "quoted" in the song. The song gestures: "I point to the green of the willows" (指青青楊柳). The song adds a subjective comment: "Once again they are casually snapped" (又是輕攀折). The linguistic differ-

ences in the line are clear in the Chinese, gesturing both to the linguistic repetition of song and the repetition of the situation. In Chinese "I point to" is the act of the moment; "the green of the willows" is eternal recurrence, going back to the Wang Wei quatrain. "Once again they are" is the judgment of the present moment; "lightly snapped" is what happens repeatedly. In formal terms it is more than this, though this depends on the Chinese; if we put the "quoted" phrases together, we get "the green of the willows lightly snapped" (青青楊柳輕攀折), easily recognizable as a regulated "poetic" line.

Wang Wei's "Yangguan qu" has a resonance because of its use at parting, and it was still used in the Song dynasty. One must imagine how boring the isometric version must have sounded to ears grown accustomed to the pleasures of heterometric lyric. I suspect it was reset to "popular music" (*xinsheng*) many times, and in this case we are fortunate to have another example, an anonymous lyric recorded in the early Southern Song *Gujin cihua* 古今詞話, to the tune title "Gu Yanggguan" 古陽關 ("Old Yang Pass").⁸

渭城朝雨，一霎裏輕塵。更洒遍客舍青青。弄柔凝。千縷
柳色新。

更迺遍客舍青青。千縷柳色新。

休煩惱。勸君更盡一杯酒，人生會少。自古富貴功名有定分。
莫遣容儀衰瘦損。休煩惱。勸君更盡一杯酒，只恐怕西出陽關，
舊遊如夢，眼前無故人。只恐怕西出陽關，眼前無故人。

By the walls of Wei City the rain at dawn
in an instant moistens the light dust.

Again it spatters on the green everywhere around the guest lodge.
Playing with suppleness made solid.

In a thousand strands the colors of willows revive.

Again it spatters on the green everywhere around the guest lodge.

In a thousand strands the colors of willows revive.

Don't be upset.

I urge you now to finish just one more cup of ale:
chances to get together are few in life.

Since ancient days riches and fame are fated.

8. Tang Guizhang 1982, 54.

Don't make your looks gaunt and ruined.
Don't be upset.
I urge you now to finish just one more cup of ale,
I fear only that once you go west through Yang Pass,
all past acquaintances will be as a dream,
no more old friends before you.
I fear only that once you go west through Yang Pass,
no more old friends before you.

This seems to be one level closer to popular song practice than the Kou Zhun version. Every line of the Wang Wei poem is included verbatim in the proper order, with some lines broken apart. Repetition is extensive (as it was in the imagined Tang song practice). If we think of Su Shi's theory of repeating the second through fourth lines of "Yangguan qu," we see here that those are exactly the lines repeated verbatim. The lyric is padded with unnecessary filler phrases and clichés ("Since ancient days riches and fame are fated").

What is most interesting is that when we look at both this and the Kou Zhun version, neither can make claims to be great lyrics worth repeating. Placed together, the lyrics remind us that Wang Wei's poem could be done hundreds of ways to almost any melody, in either a level or a deflected rhyme. These were less "texts" for preservation than transcriptions of a practice; and the ways in which a quatrain can be disassembled and supplemented for different tunes are rather obvious. This is what a singer could do—and in these cases, probably did do.

If there was such a practice in the Tang, it is invisible—invisible because it would have been taken for granted that this was "a way to sing the poem." It becomes visible in the Song because there is a written textual difference between a classical poem and heterometric lyric.

I cannot prove that this was the case in the Tang, and I will not try. All I can do is show that it was done later and illustrate how easy it was to do. It is, as I have said, a hypothesis and the easiest, most obvious way to explain a phenomenon. Until someone demonstrates that it is wrong or has better evidence for an alternative interpretation, it is a hypothesis worth keeping in mind.

II

The Early and Mid-Eleventh Century

THREE

The Yuezhang ji and Liu Yong

Liu Yong and his collection of lyrics, *Yuezhang ji* 樂章集, is an exemplary case of the problem of the relationship between song lyrics and the historical person who was supposed to have composed them.¹ In the textual record of his contemporaries, Liu Yong is completely invisible; he is neither addressed nor mentioned even once in any contemporary source. There is no question that there was such a person, and his brother Liu Sanjie 柳三接 has two contemporary appointment documents. Hightower points out that the only reliable date in Liu Yong's life is 1034, the year he passed the examination, perhaps around the age of fifty—though the date of his birth is, again, only a guess based on later anecdotes. Even though the date of his passing the examination is probably correct, one of the earliest comments on him gives the examination date as 1037. Virtually all of our "information" on the lyricist, as well as judgments passed on his work, appear at the earliest in the last quarter of the eleventh century; most appear in the twelfth century. There is a rich anecdotal lore, much of which consists of variations on the same story, leading us to doubt the veracity of any of the versions

1. Chinese scholars have written extensively of Liu Yong's biography and character as ascertained from his lyrics. James Robert Hightower analyzed the evidence over thirty years ago, pointing out what we know about Liu Yong himself, and trying to dissociate the lyrics from biography. See Hightower's two-part article "The Songwriter Liu Yung," in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 41, no. 2 (1981), pp. 323–76; and 42, no. 1 (1982), pp. 5–66.

and to wonder where the possible kernel of biographical truth might lie. More troubling is the fact that Liu Yong's posthumous image clearly changed between the last years of the Northern Song and the 1150s, and that lyrics substantiating those changes can be found in the current version of his collected lyrics. This, in turn, gives us cause to wonder if the *Yuezhang ji* itself grew to represent the evolving image of Liu Yong as a rake.² The earliest references tell of his popularity, compare him to Du Fu, and, in Su Shi, criticize the sentimentality of his style.

"Liu Yong" was as much produced by the song lyrics in the *Yuezhang ji*, as the song lyrics were produced by Liu Yong; furthermore, insofar as the *Yuezhang ji* might have been "gathered" from various sources, the growing legend of Liu Yong probably became a magnet for "long lyrics" (*manci*) of uncertain origin that sounded as though they "should have been written" by Liu Yong.³

We know that he lived in the first half of the eleventh century. Although scholars have argued for various dates, we know neither the date of his birth nor of his death with any certainty. We know that he passed the examination and traveled on official missions. In his travels he often wrote lyrics expressing his longing for the Entertainment Quarter of the capital and regretting his choice of an official's life. From this reasonably certain knowledge, we can suppose that he also wrote lyrics in the context of the Entertainment Quarter, which are well represented in the current version of *Yuezhang ji*.

Although it is strange to say of someone about whom we know so little, Liu Yong's travel lyrics make up the first substantial corpus of song lyrics written in an autobiographical voice. Sleeping by night in a rustic inn and being woken up by a passing boat has a persuasive specificity; but such specificity cannot be mapped on the empire—we don't know when or where this occurred, or what the particular context is for such moments of specificity. Scholars have labored around those points in

2. For a study of how Liu Yong's image changed in the anecdotes and the relation between that changing image and songs in the current versions of *Yuezhang ji*, see Owen, "The Changing Face of Liu Yong (?-?), " on the Asia Center's website: <https://asiacenter.harvard.edu/publications/just-a-song-chinese-lyrics-from-the-eleventh-and-early-twelfth-centuries-5b16a2b4455de72a8254200c>.

3. *Yuezhang ji* was less a "title" than a generic designation for a "collection of lyrics for music." The choice of the classical term *yuezhang* 樂章 gives it a certain patina.

the songs that do refer to the empire, such as a city, a season, the rank of a dignitary at a party. But such stable points lead to tenuous chains of inference that become steadily less persuasive. Scholars have also sought to transfer the autobiographical voice to the lyrics of the Entertainment Quarter. In some cases this does seem to be the case, but such a potentially autobiographical speaker quickly blurs into a purely typological voice. These may be no more than scenes for entertainment.

To some degree song lyric was considered *yuefu*, and in *yuefu* the poet could play roles that were not assumed to be the voice of the historical poet—though they always “might be” taken as a disguise for the poet’s true feelings. Song lyric inherited this biographical ambiguity of *yuefu*. In the preface to the *Huajian ji*, there is no suggestion that these songs should be understood as the real feelings and experiences of the men who composed them, either directly or veiled behind a surface representation of “fair women and fragrant plants” (*meiren xiangcao* 美人香草). The link between the historical poet and the representations made in the lyric was, however, necessary for establishing a certain kind of legitimacy for the genre. We see this clearly in Chen Shixiu’s 1058 preface to the *Yangchun ji*, where Feng Yansi’s song lyrics are improbably described as *yinyong xingqing* (“chanting his feelings”), the phrase that associated the lyricist with the classical poem. References to specific personal experience may be explicit in a handful of Li Yu’s lyrics; however, speculatively referring the small corpus of Li Yu’s extant lyrics to his experiences was the way those lyrics came to be read later and was essential to the way they came to be valued.

By the time Su Shi was writing song lyrics in the last quarter of the eleventh century, in some cases the genre was clearly being used like classical poetry: the poet was speaking for himself, expressing his own experiences and thoughts. Where these were not made explicit by an occasional title, fanciful anecdotes about the circumstances of composition were conjured to “explain” them.⁴

We need to keep in mind that in Liu Yong’s time and venue, song lyrics were for singing and not for reading. Different venues favored different ways of understanding the same text. Consider the following

4. This practice was inherited from classical poetry.

song to "Changshou yue" 長壽樂, likely heard as a general song in the Entertainment Quarter:⁵

尤紅殢翠。近日來、陡把狂心牽繫。
羅綺叢中, 笙歌筵上, 有個人人可意。
解嚴妝巧笑, 取次言談成嬌媚。知幾度、密約秦樓盡醉。
仍攜手, 眷戀香衾繡被。
情漸美。算好把、夕雨朝雲相繼。
便是仙禁春深, 御爐香嫋, 臨軒親試。
對天顏咫尺, 定然魁甲登高第。等恁時、等着回來賀喜。
好生地。剩與我兒利市。

Beguiled by beauty and body's pleasure—
Then recently
he suddenly found his wild heart caught and bound.
In the bevy of figured gossamer,
at parties of songs sung to ocarinas,
there was a certain someone who caught his fancy.
She knew how to make herself up and smile coyly,
casual chat made her cute as could be.
I wonder how often
he made secret vows in the Qin mansion utterly drunk.
Still holding her hand,
he yearned for the fragrant coverlet and embroidered quilt.
Their passions grew gradually finer.
And he planned that
their love-making should continue.
As soon as spring was deep in the Forbidden Precincts,
with smoke curling from the imperial braziers,
he would be personally examined by His Majesty.
Before the emperor's face nearby,
he'll certainly graduate at the top.
And when that day comes
he'll come back to be congratulated.
Be good and take care.
And I'll give my baby plenty of "congratulation tips."

5. Tang Guizhang 1999, 50; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 167.

"Congratulation tips"—or however one can translate *lishi* 利市—was the money given to the bearers at a wedding to carry the new bride to the husband's home. The term also was used more generally for tips given on special occasions. We cannot be sure whether he is going to give her money or take her away, providing money that she can give to others for that event.

Here, "he" is a type, and a type that everyone could recognize: a young man, an aspirant in the examination system, falling in love with a courtesan.

As a text that came to be read in a regime of literary authorship, the typological "he" becomes Liu Yong's autobiographical "I." This effects some interesting changes in understanding the text. As a song in the Entertainment Quarter, it would elicit a smile in the audience at the fantasy of a naïve young client who has fallen in love and who dreams of making his girlfriend his "wife"—or more likely, concubine. I might add that only in this context does the second stanza hang together: the fantasy is the way he will ensure that their love-making will continue.

When we take it as Liu Yong's autobiographical "I," it becomes his personal passion. Rather than the naïve fantasy of an aspirant to the examination, most of the second stanza shows his confidence in his talent. Finally, Liu Yong, the legendary lover who moves from one beloved to the next, cannot be allowed to wish to settle down with one woman, so the "congratulation tip" (or "[extra] profit in a market transaction") refers simply to giving the singer some money.

In a significant part of his work Liu Yong was the lyricist who, in his songs, played the love games of the Entertainment Quarter. When he was not in the capital he often nostalgically looked back to that world and wrote about it. In the growing biographical regime for song lyric toward the end of the eleventh century, he became judged as personally responsible for what he wrote. One of the most famous anecdotes, from about fifty years after his death and almost certainly apocryphal, embodies that sense of being held responsible for what one writes—not the specifics, but the kind of thing he writes:⁶

6. *Tiaoxi yuyin conghua*, second series (1167) (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1962), 319. Cited from Yan Youyi 嚴有翼 (early 12th c.), *Yiyuan cihuang* 藝苑雌黃.

Liu Sanbian's courtesy name was Jingzhuang; he was also named Yong, with the courtesy name Qiqing. He liked to write minor song lyrics but was unsound in his behavior. At the time there was someone who recommended his talent. His Majesty said, "Isn't this the Liu Sanbian who writes song lyrics?" The recommender said it was indeed, and His Majesty said, "Let him go off then and write song lyrics." From this point on Liu felt failure in his public career (*bu de zhi*) and spent his days with wastrels visiting brothels and taverns, with no further moderation or restraint. He declared himself "Liu Sanbian with an Imperial Command to Write Song Lyrics." It is unfortunate that someone with a little talent lacked the virtue to accompany it.

There is much to reflect on in this little anecdote about a man who has left so few traces in the historical record. That he changed his name for whatever reason is credible; that he also changed his courtesy name (*zi*) leaves us with too many names. He is accused of bad behavior before he is recommended to Emperor Renzong (r. 1022–63) (presumably contributing to Renzong's witty rejection), but then the rejection is the cause of his giving up "moderation and restraint" in his behavior. The representations in song are taken as evidence of the person's conduct, both the cause and effect of his public failure.

When did this image of Liu Yong as a dissolute rake become so well established that it was taken for granted? We cannot be certain, but probably the earliest reference to the *Yuezhang ji*, recalling hearing Liu Yong's songs as a youth, gives us a very different impression of the poet:⁷

予觀柳氏樂章，喜其能道熹[嘉]祐中太平氣象，如觀杜甫詩，典雅文華，無所不有。是時予方為兒，猶想見其風俗，歡聲和氣，洋溢道路之間，動植咸若。令人歌柳詞，聞其聲、聽其詞，如丁斯時，使人慨然有感。嗚呼。太平氣象，柳能一寫於樂章，所謂詞人盛世之黼藻，豈可廢耶？

I was reading the *Song Lyrics* (*yuezhang*) of Mr. Liu, and was delighted by his ability to express the atmosphere of peace in the Jiayou reign (1056–64). It is like reading Du Fu's poetry, in every way replete with canonical grace and cultural splendor. At that time I was but a child, and I can still envision the customs then, with sounds of revelry and a mood of harmony flooding over the streets. If you have someone sing Liu's lyrics, hear the

7. Huang Chang 黃裳 (1044–1130). *Yanshan ji* 演山集, (SKQS) *juan* 35.

music and listen to the lyrics, it's [like] encountering such times again. It makes a person feel moved with strong feeling. Ah, the atmosphere of peace, and Liu was able to write it all into his song lyrics. This is what is meant by lyricists being the adornment of an age of splendor—how can they be dismissed?

This is an undated colophon "Written after the *Yuezhang ji*" 書樂章集後 by the lyricist Huang Chang 黃裳 (1044–1130).⁸ The wistfulness for the peaceful age of his youth suggests that the colophon comes from later in his life and the troubled times occurred before or even after the fall of the Northern Song.

This is not a defense of Liu Yong against the charge of a debauched lifestyle; Huang Chang seems utterly unaware of such charges.⁹ Huang Chang also seems not to quite know when Liu Yong lived and was writing: he takes Liu Yong's lyrics as representing the Jiayou reign, but if current dating guesses are correct, Liu Yong, if still alive, was or would have been in his early seventies when the Jiaoyou reign began, with his career as a lyricist behind him. And the remarkable comparison of Liu Yong to Du Fu hardly became a standard part of the tradition of critical comment on Liu Yong. This is perhaps the only time that Liu Yong's song lyrics were characterized as *dianya*, possessing "classical grace." In short, Huang Chang seems to be reading Liu Yong very differently from later readers. We should entertain the possibility that Huang Chang was indeed reading a version of *Yuezhang ji* that might have looked rather different from the one we currently have, but certainly contained all the lyrics for the emperor and the splendors of his city.

Regardless of when the *Yuezhang ji* appeared, its current version shares one peculiarity with only a few other lyric collections: the *Yuezhang ji* is arranged by technical musical categories. Indeed, we often find tunes to the same pattern placed in different musical categories determining the mode. What this suggests was a collection compiled

8. The fact that the collection was known at the end of the eleventh or in the first third of the twelfth century does not necessarily mean that it was printed. The earliest printing we know of with certainty was in the series *Lyrics by a Hundred Masters* (*Baijia ci* 百家詞), printed in the first decade of the thirteenth century (completed in 1210).

9. This could be implied in the possible "dismissal" of his lyrics at the end of the colophon, but the context suggests a more general dismissal of the genre as a whole.

based on the needs of musicians and performers, who were not looking for lyrics for the tune "Qingbei yue" 傾杯樂, for example, but for lyrics in the mode "Xian lü gong" 仙呂宮 or "Da shi diao" 大石調, under both of which they will find a lyric to "Qingbei yue."

We might try to situate Liu Yong's work historically in the world of song lyric before the last quarter of the eleventh century, when the genre took on a new literary life. Feng Yansi had died in 960 and Li Yu in 978. Even if we were to accept all the song lyrics attributed to Li Yu in the *Nan Tang erzhu ci* as genuine (which is most unlikely), it is still a very small corpus. Between 978 and the period when Liu Yong and Yan Shu became most active—perhaps as early as the second decade of the eleventh century—only scattered lyrics and sets survive.

Internal evidence in songs tells us that both Liu Yong and Yan Shu wrote down their lyrics, but it seems very unlikely that the lyrics were circulating as "books" available for reading before the second half of the eleventh century. We have seen that Feng Yansi's collection was also a product of that period. Li Yu's collected lyrics were compiled from scattered sources in the second half of the twelfth century. Lyrics do seem to have circulated individually and in sets, and there were probably song-books—perhaps better described a repertoires—for household use. But before the second half of the eleventh century, there is no evidence that song lyric was generally "read," much less read in books.

The "Long Lyric" (*manci* 慢詞)

琅璫: 村妓唱長詞

Not quite right: A village singer singing
a long lyric.¹⁰

—Wang Junyu, *Zazuan xu*

Song lyric is divided into two large categories: "short songs" (*xiaoling*), and "long lyrics" (*manci*). The boundaries between the two categories blurred in tunes of intermediate length, but the norms of the two categories were quite distinct. *Xiaoling* were, by and large, old inherited tunes, familiar to all; new *xiaoling* were added only infrequently. Although

10. Qu Yanbin, 67; cited in Bossler, 8.

manci can be found in the Dunhuang lyrics, new *manci* melodies were continuously composed and entered the repertoire. Some *manci* became popular; others appeared only once or a few times and then fell out of the repertoire. The *Yuezhang ji* contains many *xiaoling* but is predominantly made up of *manci*. Other lyric collections representing the practice of the first half of the eleventh century are entirely *xiaoling* or almost entirely *xiaoling*. The exception is the long-lived Zhang Xian, who seems to have turned to composing *manci* later in his life.

Domestic and official singers seem to have been trained exclusively in *xiaoling* in the first half of the eleventh century. This is hardly surprising because *xiaoling* would have been much easier to learn. It is hard to know with certainty, but this situation may have changed in the larger cities in the second half of the century. Wang Junyu's "case" of something that is *langdang*, roughly translated as "not quite right," suggests that hearing a less-than-professional singer trying to perform a complicated *manci* could be an awkward experience.

We need not doubt that the "private" singers of the capital could perform *xiaoling*, as an opera *prima donna* could sing new lyrics to "The Yellow Rose of Texas," but at least initially *manci* seems to have been largely their sphere. These were two different worlds. *Xiaoling* were a necessary part of a larger social activity, a party, and they seem to have often been performed outdoors. *Manci* were performed in the Entertainment Quarter, often indoors, and in Liu Yong they are often represented as being performed for an audience in the full sense; that is, the performance was itself the main object of attention rather than a necessary component of a larger social activity. The singers are often named. The scene in Liu Yong's "Liu yao qing" 柳腰輕 is altogether different from the parties represented in *xiaoling*:"

英英妙舞腰肢軟。章臺柳、昭陽燕。
錦衣冠蓋，綺堂筵會，是處千金爭選。
顧香砌、絲管初調，倚輕風、珮環微顫。
乍入霓裳促遍。逞盈盈、漸催檀板。
慢垂霞袖，急趨蓮步，進退奇容千變。
算何止、傾國傾城，暫回眸、萬人腸斷。

11. Tang Guizhang 1999, 20; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 22; Gu Zhijiang, 36.

Yingying dances exquisitely, waist and limbs supple.
 The willow of Zhang Terrace,¹²
 Zhaoyan Palace's "swallow."¹³
 Robes of brocade, official caps and carriage awnings,
 gather for a party in the finely wrought hall,
 everywhere a thousand pieces of silver compete to choose her.
 She looks around to the scented stairs,
 the pipes and strings begin to play,
 and in a light breeze, her pendants faintly quiver.
 First she goes into the fast movement of "Skirts of Rainbow."
 Showing off her charms,
 she gradually hastens the clappers' beat.
 Then slowly she lets hang her sleeves of colored wisps,
 with swift pace her lotus steps
 advancing, withdrawing, a thousand changes in her wondrous manner.
 As I judge it, no mere toppler of cities and kingdoms—
 where she turns her eyes for a moment,
 thousands of hearts break.

Yingying is far from the usually anonymous "beauties" we see in *xiaoling* and in some of Liu Yong's own lyrics. Yingying is a "star." We might keep this in mind in considering Liu Yong's *manci* on his travels. It is likely he could have found reasonably competent singers in the large cities of the lower Yangzi, where some of his lyrics were composed for social occasions; but whenever he was traveling or in some backwater, he usually closed with some melancholy statement on missing the Entertainment Quarter and an unnamed beloved. This may suggest that the lyrics were sent back to the capital, where they could be performed properly, and that by this point Liu Yong was himself a "star," whose name added value to the song.

12. From a poem by Han Hong on his beloved, Miss Liu (Willow).

13. Zhao Feiyan (Flying Swallow), the Han imperial favorite famous for her dancing.

Love in the Entertainment Quarter

Here I repeat my earlier word of caution: these were initially performance texts, representing a world with its own decorum and values and written for other participants in that world. The texts advertise, confirm, and teach the ways of that world. They present both the participants' passions themselves and an ironic smile at their illusions and delusions. If Liu Yong, the composer of song, represents himself as a lover in that world, he may or may not "mean it"; but this is *not* confessional love lyric. As song lyric came to be read like classical poetry later in the eleventh century, it would gradually come to seem as if these were intimate, personal songs. And under that new regime of reading, combined with the increasingly strict public morality of the twelfth century, Liu Yong the person would be posthumously understood as the role he played. Some damned him; somewhat later others made him a hero of urban counterculture.

Liu Yong had an intimate knowledge of the Bianjing Entertainment Quarter. He knew its jargon and its poses: he knew the phases of the love game, sometimes represented with a knowing wink, and sometimes as a serious interaction that could not be separated from the images given within the song. Instead of the anonymous sexuality of the party songs of Yan Shu—"best to take as your love the person before your eyes"—Liu Yong's is a world of individual liaisons. The women are sometimes named. These are particular relations, with vows of permanence made and broken. These women can read and write—indeed in one lyric discussed later, Liu Yong imagines a beloved's image writing the letter he is reading. There may have been little actual constancy, but constancy had become a value. It is no longer just a woman's yearning for constancy of affection that is displayed, but male constancy of affection as well: indeed, Liu Yong balances the display of woman, constructed to produce male desire, by giving us representations of male longing, a longing that is modeled on and in many cases mirrors the old tropes of female longing. One might wish to take it as a simple expression of feeling, but in most cases it seems to be an image to be performed back in the capital. For the first time in Liu Yong we begin to find the representation of relationships

that are in some ways modern, problematic, and intense. In “Man juan chou” 慢卷紉 Liu Yong is characteristically tossing and turning, yearning for his absent beloved and imagining that she, too, must be upset thinking of him:¹⁴

又爭似從前，淡淡相看，免恁牽繫。

How could it be as it used to be,
looking at each other dispassionately,
without such ties pulling the heart?

However simple this may be and however established it became in song lyric later in the century, it lay outside the standard discourse of love earlier in the Chinese tradition (and in other traditions as well). Love is supposed to occur “at first sight” (*chujian* 初見). We are not completely sure how to take *dandan* 淡淡, whether it is the “indifference” of the man and woman looking at each other before they fall in love, or a “complacency” in looking at each other when they are long together. In either case something happens; they are estranged or separated, but the ties in the heart last on. Liu Yong tells the simple truths of the world.

The simple truth is performed by the courtesan as star, performer and object of collective male desire. We can see the early stages of this in courtesan culture of the late ninth century, in the “Account of the Northern Ward” (“Beili zhi” 北里志),¹⁵ but the scenes of collective adoration in Liu Yong carry this to a new level. Liu Yong’s courtesan “stars” represent a system of value that money and social power can touch but cannot fully control. It involves a reversal of the power hierarchy that would have been profoundly disturbing in the *xiaoling* world of household entertainers and official entertainers.

The private singer is accessible, but she has her own terms. If successful, her success is as a merchant neither of sex nor song, but of illusion; and the power to sell illusion, rather than simply to perform it, changes the rules. Those with money and status can compete to buy her favor, but the sale of illusion is at her discretion. Everyone knows that

14. Tang Guizhang 1999, 27; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 65.

15. See Rouzer, 249–83, for an extended discussion.

her love may be only an illusion, and that uncertainty returns as a theme in song, as in the following lyric to “Rui zhegu” 瑞鷓鴣.¹⁶

寶髻瑤簪。嚴妝巧，天然綠媚紅深。綺羅叢裏，獨逞謳吟。
一曲陽春定價，何啻值千金。傾聽處，王孫帝子，鶴蓋成陰。
凝態掩霞襟。動象板聲聲，怨思難任。嘹亮處，迴厭弦管低沈。
時恁回眸斂黛，空役五陵心。須信道，緣情寄意。別有知音。

Jeweled hair-bun, jasper pins.
Formal makeup artfully done,
all natural, green brows beguiling, red lips deep.
In the figured gossamer bevy
she alone displays her singing.
Setting the price for just one rendition of “Bright Spring,”
how could it be a mere thousand in silver?
When they listen in rapture,
princes and high nobility
crowd carriage awnings together casting shade.
A serious manner, covered by aurora-hued clothes.
In every note to the ivory castanets
her resentful thoughts are hard to bear.
When her notes are sharp and high,
the pipes and strings sink deep, far in the background.
When now and then she turns her gaze and knits her brows,
she enthalls the helpless hearts of rich playboys.
But they should be aware:
for the feelings and thoughts she conveys
there is someone else who understands the song.

Though the price is high, there is a price for the song. The song performs love—indeed the most common motif in the Chinese love repertoire, the woman’s resentment at the man she loves. The performance stirs desire, but Liu Yong claims that the compelling power of the song lies in the fact that she truly feels what she sings and that there is someone who understands the “burden” of the song—perhaps someone in the enthralled audience. Some Chinese commentators want to make that

16. Tang Guizhang 1999, 61; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 224.

person Liu Yong himself—but that is not important. The song plays on the margin between “meaning it” and “seeming to mean it.” And we must never forget that this song about song will itself be performed; the infatuated “fans” do not mind being described as such, so long as they are assured in the possibility that her art is grounded in her feelings as a person and not just technical mastery of the mimesis of feeling.

Liu Yong represents himself as a player in that world, a broker and advertiser who creates illusion, participates in it, and is ultimately trapped by those values. *Xiaoling* give us scenes of desire; Liu Yong represents complex personal relationships, with the depth and duration of the relationship as a recurrent theme. We do not know how much to believe of the Liu Yong legend, but his lyrics construct the character. We sometimes see him explicitly composing lyrics to please women, and we infer he did it often. If this is so, what pleased so many was a radical transformation of the poetry of love and desire in the Chinese tradition.

In her lover's absence the woman is always “too languid” to do her hair and make-up properly, and she loses weight. We recognize that woman in the opening of Liu Yong's lyric to “Jintang chun” 錦堂春, which seems to be set in the Entertainment Quarter, but it also could be a domestic scene.¹⁷

墜髻慵梳，愁蛾懶畫，心緒是事闌珊。覺新來憔悴，金縷衣寬。
認得這疏狂意下，向人訴譬如閑。把芳容整頓，恁地輕孤，爭
忍心安。

依前過了舊約，甚當初賺我，偷翦雲鬟。幾時得歸來，香閣深闌。
待伊要、尤雲殢雨，纏繡衾、不與同歡。
儘更深、款款問伊，今後敢更無端。

Too languid to comb my dangling tresses,
too lazy to paint my melancholy brows,
I feel ennui at everything.
I realize I look rather haggard lately,
and my golden-thread dress has become baggy.
I know that unruly man's state of mind,
casually scolding me with a sneer.
When I get myself all dressed up

17. Tang Guizhang 1999, 37; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 118.

and he still lightly turns his back on me like this,
how can my heart be calm?

As before he's missed the agreed-upon time,
why did he take advantage of me at first,
stealthily snipping a lock of my hair?
When the time comes when he returns,
I'll lock myself deep in my chambers.
I'll wait until he wants to make love,
then wrap myself in my embroidered quilt
and refuse to share pleasure with him.
I'll let the night go on and then ask him softly,
"From now on are you going to be so willful again?"

Keeping in mind that this is for performance, we see a conventional portrayal of a woman's ennui, whose cause is immediately recognized by the audience. The lyric supplements the conventional scene with thoughts and words that reveal a subject who plans to do something or wishes she had done something. In breaking through a false surface to some apparent psychological truth, it invites a smile. This is not entirely unprecedented. In the Tang and Five Dynasties popular song tradition we see a similar trend, in which the woman left alone curses her beloved or bawls him out when he comes home drunk.¹⁸

This boundary between the elite representation of women as passive vessels of feeling and a popular representation of women with agency—even speculative agency—may have been one of the sore spots around which Liu Yong's reputation changed. We might begin with one of Liu's most famous lyrics, to "Ding fengbo" 定風波, a domestic scene. Motives, intentions, poses, and stagings enter everywhere in these lyrics—not as the falsification of passion, but as the consequence of passion. Here the woman suffers because she has not exercised agency, but the speculation tells us that, as in the preceding lyric, she has learned her lesson.¹⁹

自春來、慘綠愁紅，芳心是事可可。
日上花梢，鶯穿柳帶，猶壓香衾臥。

18. Ren Bantang 1987, 254, 348, 353.

19. Tang Guizhang 1999, 37; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 119.

暖酥消，膩雲禪。終日厭厭倦梳裏。
 無那。恨薄情一去，音書無個。
 早知恁麼。悔當初、不把雕鞍鎖。
 向雞窗、只與蠻箋象管，拘束教吟課。
 鎮相隨，莫拋躲。針線閑拈伴伊坐。
 和我。免使年少，光陰虛過。

Ever since spring came,
 with its dreary greens and gloomy reds,
 my loving heart feels blah at everything.
 When the sun rises through the flowering branches
 and orioles thread through willow fronds,
 I still lie there, pressing on scented quilts.
 My warm lotions melt,
 glossy tresses hang askew.
 All day long I feel ennui, too weary to comb or tie up my hair.
 What can I do?—
 I hate how once that unfeeling man left,
 there hasn't been a single word.
 If only I had known before it would be like this.
 I regret at the very beginning
 not locking his well-wrought saddle away.
 In his study
 I would have given him only paper and ivory brushes
 and confined him to his poetry lessons.
 I would have followed him everywhere,
 never let him out of my sight.
 Idly fingering needle and thread, I would have sat by him.
 And together with me
 we would avoid letting youth's
 time pass by in vain.

Here and elsewhere the female or the male speaker is often displayed in the text in situations where the putative audience might want to look, but would normally be denied. This is not the standard voyeurism of earlier poetry: we have prurient bedroom scenes for the male audience of the demimonde. Often the first stanza is used for such static display, while the second stanza comments on it.

This lyric was the occasion of one of the earlier anecdotes about Liu Yong (though it surfaces well after Liu Yong's death and perhaps seventy years after the incident described). There is no hint yet of Liu Yong earning opprobrium because he is a lyricist or a rake; he is merely incautious in his choice of words. Liu Yong has presented a lyric to Renzong, who is angered because it inadvertently echoes a poem by Renzong mourning his father. Disappointed by the emperor's rejection, Liu Yong seeks out Yan Shu.²⁰

Yan Shu said, "Are you the talented man who writes songs?" Sanbian replied, "Just as Your Excellency also writes songs." Yan Shu said, "Although I write songs, I have never said anything like: 'Idly fingering needle and thread, I would have sat by him.'" Liu then left.

The anecdote is clearly a lesson about the danger of allowing certain things one has written to enter circulation. The modern reader may well wonder what could possibly give offense in such an innocuous line, especially when the theme has good precedents in Tang poetry.²¹ We know that it was perfectly all right to represent a young wife, deserted by her husband, facing a spring scene and yearning for his return. What was, perhaps, not acceptable were the woman's comments on what she should have done to make him stay home, that is, her expression of her potential ability to manipulate her husband into doing what she wanted. Perhaps the real transgression, however, was representing an intimate, everyday domestic scene of speculative sitting side by side, especially performed in song. In the Tang poem, the woman simply regrets having encouraged her husband to go off and seek glory. But this young woman proposes a domestic strategy, as had the irate beloved of "Jintang chun."

It is most unlikely that Yan Shu, some of whose lyrics are far more erotically charged than this, and Liu Yong ever met. The shaping of the anecdote does, however, suggest the forces at work around song lyric.

20. Zhang Shunmin 張舜民 (d. ca. 1100), *Hua man lu* 畫墁錄 (SKQS).

21. Cf. "Boudoir Resentment" 閨怨, attributed to Wang Changling 王昌齡, QTs 06803.

The Imagined Image

The two preceding lyrics come at last to a scene of what the woman would say or what the situation might have been if the young woman had acted to her advantage. They come to a focus.

The imagined image is, of course, usually the beloved, and we have an interesting pair of lyrics to "Feng xian bei" 鳳銜杯.²² The first song argues that a poem and letter, sent by the beloved from afar, are adequate to heal the pain of longing; the second song argues that they are inadequate. Both arguments are necessary: the representation must successfully replace and sustain the relationship in absence, but at the same time, as advertising, the representation must direct the reader or viewer back toward the real thing: it must create desire. In the first stanza of the first lyric of "Feng xian bei," reading the beloved's letter and poem remarkably does not recall sensual delights shared together, but imagines the scene of composition of the poem and letter.

有美瑤卿能染翰。千里寄、小詩長簡。
想初鬟苔牋，旋揮翠管紅窗畔。漸玉箸、銀鉤滿。

There was the fair Yaoqing, adept at dipping the writing brush.
She sent me across a thousand leagues
a tiny poem and a long letter.
I imagine when she first folded the notepaper,
then brandished the azure brush beside the red window.
It gradually filled with lines of jade and silvery hooks.

As in the ancient figure for successful writing, the text is like seeing the person face to face; in the second stanza of the first lyric the lyricist speaks of treasuring the gift and concludes: "It is like seeing often her face of a thousand charms" (似頻見、千嬌面). But the precise scene envisaged is one of composition, the woman *writing*. That moment of "expression" is vested with all the sexual charm of the woman in bed in the lyric given after this pair. The description of the scene of writing is

22. Tang Guizhang 1999, 22–23; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 36.

an attention to the postures of the moving body, expressing passion in the written word rather than in sex.

In the second lyric of "Feng xian bei," the lyricist is in the Southland, Jiangnan, "the waters of Yue and the hills of Wu" (越水吳山), which are like paintings. He finds himself in the venerable scene of song, trying in vain to have a good time:

賞煙花，聽絃歌。圖歡笑，轉加腸斷。

I enjoy the "misty flowers,"
listen to songs sung to strings.
But whenever I plan to have pleasure,
it only increases my heartbreak.

The sensual pleasures of Jiangnan no longer have the power to ensnare and absorb him, however much he may try to lose himself in them: like Xuanzong's dangerous passion for Yang Guifei, the "love that was due three thousand is set on one body alone." The old anonymous sensuality is no longer enough, because of the presence of mediating representations of the absent beloved: a painting (*danqing* 丹青) and the letters (*shuxin* 書信), or even memory. Although they sustain the relationship in the beloved's absence, being advertising they cannot be adequate in themselves. Every time he looks at them—and he looks at them all the time (*pinpin kan* 頻頻看)—he is reminded of their inferiority to the real thing: "But then how can they compare to seeing her in person?" (又爭似、親相見。)

Such imagined images of the beloved, her or his reduction to a representation of unconsummated desire, finally lead us back to the actual physical encounter itself. Just as Tao Qian watched his own shadow drinking in the preface to "Drinking Ale" 飲酒, unself-consciousness becomes necessarily mediated by an image of unself-consciousness; in the same way, the sexual encounter also becomes a representation, a staged event that involves watching and being watched as much as doing. This can be seen in the *xiaoling* "Yingchun yue" 迎春樂.²³

23. Tang Guizhang 1999, 38; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 123.

近來憔悴人驚怪。為別後、相思煞。
 我前生、負你愁煩債。便苦恁難開解。
 良夜永、牽情無計奈。錦被裏、餘香猶在。
 怎得依前燈下，恁意憐嬌態。

People are shocked that I recently look like a wreck.
 It's because I have missed you so awfully
 since we parted.
 From some earlier life of mine
 I owe you a debt of misery.
 Suffering so, and unable to get free.
 As the fine night lasts on,
 I have no way to keep from thoughts of love.
 Within the brocade covers your lingering scent still stays.
 How can I ever in lamplight as before
 dote on your charming shape as much as I please?

In "Yingchun yue" we see that longing produces an image in the mind, a memory reconstituted as desire, like the portrait in the second "Feng xian bei." It is an inexplicable intensity of desire, which the poet can explain only as "a debt of misery" owed the beloved from a former life. That Buddhist structure of debt and repayment, which becomes so important in the vernacular literature of romance, is here the means to explain the inexplicable focus on one person, rather than desire dispersed among the available many.

The image that the speaker bears in mind is the hope of recurrence, the reenactment of an old scene. The motif of absorption in the moment becomes the desire for a recurrent moment, the beloved by lamplight. The last line is "dote on your charming shape as much as I please" (恁意憐嬌態). *Lian* 憐 is the pleasure of love, but its object is her "charming shape" (*jiaotai* 嬌態), the way she looks. The end of pleasure is not entirely seeing, but at the same time the sexual meeting cannot be separated from seeing. The development of love and romance out of simple sexuality within a civilization cannot be separated from representations—an art of stories, songs, dances, pictures. And strangely the displacement that occurs within the act of representation can no

longer be separated from the relationship itself. It is not that song simply represents love, but rather that lovers try to live up to the images of song, and measure fact against image. And yet those images of song themselves come from the human heart. It is one of those situations in which we cannot decide on cause and effect, but clearly the two, representation and fact, are bound in a reciprocal relation.

"Ju hua xin" 菊花新 is a remarkable version of such representation of representation, in which the woman's staging of the sexual encounter corresponds to the male's speculative desire in "Yingchun yue."²⁴

欲掩香幃論縫紼。先斂雙蛾愁夜短。
催促少年郎，先去睡、鴛衾圖暖。
須臾放了殘鍼線。脫羅衣、恣情無限。
留取帳前燈，時時待、看伊嬌面。

About to close the scented bed-curtain, considering making love,
she first knits her two brows, worrying that the night is short.
She hurries her young man
to go to bed first,
intending that he warm up the mandarin-duck quilts.
A moment later she puts down the last of her sewing.
She takes off her gossamer clothes,
giving passion free rein.
A lamp was left by the bed-hangings,
now and then
he could look at her charming face.

The opening line is the scene before going to bed, one of the almost domestic scenes that seem to have most troubled Liu Yong's critics.²⁵ Yan Shu was scandalized by the last lines of "Ding fengbo," translated earlier; Li Qingzhao 李清照 observed that the lyric above was the most erotic of Liu Yong's lyrics.

24. Tang Guizhang 1999, 48; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 162.

25. I take the sewing as the marker of a quasi-domestic situation. This appears in lyrics for deceased wives, but not usually in the rhetoric of the Entertainment Quarter. It is, however, questionable that a wife would refer to her husband as "her young man" (*shaonian lang* 少年郎).

The woman knits her brows at the thought of the shortness of autumn nights: she obviously plans to make a full night of it. Then remarkably she sends the young man into the bed first so that he will warm up the covers. Having waited a bit, she puts down her sewing and takes her clothes off. Of course, the significant gesture is *liuqu zhangqian deng* 留取帳前燈 (leaving the lamp burning before the bed curtains). We don't know for certain whether the man or the woman has left the oil lamp there, but since the woman goes to bed last, we may assume it is her doing. On the other hand, the person who from time to time looks on her "charming face" (*jiaomian* 嬌面) must be the man. She seems to be staging her own being seen. And such sexual staging is not unrelated to the display of the courtesan song.

In this context we might consider the allure of the figure of the innocent girl in "Dou baihua" 鬥百花.²⁶

滿搦宮腰纖細。年紀方當笄歲。剛被風流沾惹，與合垂楊雙髻。
初學嚴妝，如描似削身材，怯雨羞雲情意。舉措多嬌媚。
爭奈心性，未會先憐佳婿。長是夜深，不肯入鴛被。
與解羅裳，盈盈背立銀釭，卻道你但先睡。

Harem-waist so slender, two-hands girth,
her age, right at the time for pinning up hair.²⁷
Just having felt the lure of love,
she had two tresses done as "dangling willow."
Beginning to imitate proper make-up,
her figure is as if it was sculpted,
but her heart is shy about sex and afraid.
And everything she does has charm.
It's inevitable that the way she feels
she can't yet take initiative in loving her husband.
When it's late at night she always
won't get right under the marriage quilt.
On purpose she takes off her gossamer skirt
and, lovely, stands with her back to the lamp,
saying, "You go to sleep first."

26. Tang Guizhang 1999, 18–19; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 14.

27. Fifteen *sui*, most likely fourteen years old by Western count.

She tells the beloved to go to bed first, indeed to go to sleep first. When she is undressed, she turns her back to the lamp. She does not want to be seen—or half does not want to be seen. Innocence is not valorized in its own right: it is a charming and transient stage before she takes to leaving the lamp burning so that the man can look at her. Innocence, here defined as the withheld but adequately imagined body, is no less displayed and advertised. There is no sense of the ugliness of the fall into sexuality here, as one often finds in some Western representations. Compared to the woman in “Yingchun yue” who displays the body directly, this young woman’s innocence is quite simply ignorance. There is no indication that the mature desire to be viewed is less alluring than the immature desire not to be viewed, the girl’s discomfort with being desired. What is significant in both cases is the mediation of the image, the representation, in desire.

Advertising

Of the many stories that surround Liu Yong and the popularity of his songs, one thirteenth-century anecdote concerns a version of “Wang haichao” 望海潮 that describes the beauties of Hangzhou. The story goes that the Jin emperor, on hearing this song, was so attracted by the image of Hangzhou that he took it in mind to invade the Southern Song. This anecdote bears an interesting relation to the statement made in the conclusion of the song:²⁸

異日圖將好景，歸去鳳池誇。

In days to come plan to take this fine scene
and return to boast of it at the Phoenix Pool [Secretariat].

Although the anecdote about the Jin emperor is clearly apocryphal, Liu Yong invites such an anecdote within the song itself: it is presented as advertising, “boasting” (*kua* 誇)—a representation of the place to be

28. Tang Guizhang 1999, 50; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 169.

sent elsewhere, there to stir admiration and desire. The song is a travel poster, a glossy image produced for display. It follows in a long tradition of poems praising cities, and at several points echoes the motif "the Southland is best" (*Jiangnan hao* 江南好).²⁹ Whether in songs about courtesans, in female monologues, or in landscapes in which Liu Yong is himself placed, there is often such an element of advertising in Liu Yong's songs. We see it in Liu Yong's many celebrations of Bianjing, the capital, and other cities.

Courtesans are advertised in much the same way. "Zhouye yue" 晝夜樂, about the courtesan Xiuxiang 秀香, praises the woman, her beauty, her singer's skill, and the sexual delight that can be shared with her.³⁰ Such lyrics are pure advertising, often including an address along with the courtesan's name.

秀香家住桃花徑，算神仙，纔堪並。

Xiuxiang's home is on Peach Blossom Lane—
Only a god or immortal, I judge,
could ever be ranked beside her.

Although the circulation of such songs probably served a commercial function, the lyric may be more than that: it speaks to the woman herself as well as to the potential customers, and it makes an affirmation to the woman of her value, in a very public confirmation.

Landscapes

We know that after passing the examination, Liu Yong held a series of posts in the provinces, with occasional returns to Bianjing. Despite the attempted precisions of Liu Yong's biographers, the dates are uncertain. What we do not know is how much he traveled before passing the examination. This is of interest because the *Yuezhang ji* contains a large

29. For a full translation see Chapter 10, "Qin Guan."

30. Tang Guizhang 1999, 20; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 21.

number of *manci* written when Liu Yong was traveling. The form these *manci* take is usually one or more descriptive stanzas, concluding with a statement of longing for a woman from the Entertainment Quarter or of regret at having left the Quarter in general. Some lyrics, written while he was staying at rustic inns, do not suggest an official on a public mission. Other lyrics, such as those expressing regret at having given up life in the Entertainment Quarter for an official career, were clearly composed after 1034. Passing the examination and assigned a post, he had little choice. Continuously voicing his disappointment at entering an official career, however, can hardly have endeared him to his superiors: one was supposed to express a desire to "repay" the emperor for his favor, rather than to bemoan the fact that one was being led astray by the desire for "fame and fortune" (*mingli* 名利). Insofar as such lyrics were performed in the Entertainment Quarter, they were both beautiful and moving accounts of the larger empire and reaffirmations that within the empire the Entertainment Quarter was the place to be.

The question at hand is the significance of this repeated expression of loss and regret. These have been taken as purely "lyric" expression of his feelings, but the move becomes as routine as the melancholic languor of the abandoned woman, of which this is the male counterpart.

Two considerations are necessary here. First, at this period song lyric was, as we have stressed, not "literature" that was read in books. It was performed. Even the *Yuezhang ji* is organized so that a singer could find lyrics to a certain tune pattern under a certain mode. This was not for performance by amateurs, but by professionals. Second, music, like other aspects of Chinese culture, was regional, with a distinct, trans-regional culture represented by peripatetic officialdom. In this period their music, disseminated by the official and household performers, was *xiaoling*. As in earlier periods there may have been some dissemination of the music of the capital Entertainment Quarter to the entertainment quarters of various regional cities, but the full repertoire at its best, incorporating fashionable new songs, was the special privilege of the capital Entertainment Quarter.

This invites consideration that Liu Yong's travel *manci* were meant to be sent or taken back to the Bianjing Entertainment Quarter to be performed. With this hypothesis we do not have to imagine a local

entertainer awkwardly performing a *manci* that declares how inferior local entertainers are to the singers in the capital. We also do not have to worry about local officialdom taking offense at Liu Yong's regret at having undertaken an official career (though some lyrics seem to have been written for local officials, and these, of course, do not express such sentiments). Finally, Liu Yong's repeated expressions of regret at leaving the capital and his desire to return—whether sincere or not—celebrate the preciousness of the venue of their performance in the capital and its superiority over the provinces.

Setting aside the routine endings, many of the *manci* of Liu Yong's travels are quite remarkable, taking the song lyric into utterly new discursive territory with a fusion of mood and description that was unique to *manci*. These seem related to lyrics on festive life in the capital, such as the Lantern Festival on the fifteenth of the first month—probably the kind of lyric that so struck Huang Chang. The gift of *manci* was the ability to catch the irregular movement of thought and experience apparently naturally in a strict form. The following lyric to “Ji Tianshen” 祭天神 is unusual in beginning with the lyricist's regrets.³¹

歎笑筵歌席輕拋擲。背孤城、幾舍煙村停畫舸。
更深鈞叟歸來，數點殘燈火。被連綿宿酒醺醺，愁無那。
寂寞擁、重衾臥。

又聞得、行客扁舟過。篷窗近，蘭棹急，好夢還驚破。
念平生、單棲蹤跡，多感情懷，到此厭厭，向曉披衣坐。

I sigh how the parties of laughter and song
were too lightly cast aside.
Away from an isolated city, after several stages
of misty hamlets we stopped the painted boat.
As deep in the night old fishermen returned,
I counted the dots of their fading lanterns.
Wooziness lasting on and on from drinking the night before,
I could not help feeling sad.
And in the silence I lay there wrapped in layers of blankets.
And then again I heard
a traveler's boat pass by.

31. Tang Guizhang 1999, 47; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 157.

The cabin window was nearby,
 its magnolia oars plied urgently,
 and I was startled from a fine dream.
 I brood on a lifetime's
 occasions of sleeping alone,
 it very much stirs my heart,
 by this point with such dreariness
 that I put on my clothes and sit until dawn.

It is remarkable how the stylish songs of the pleasures of the city and the Entertainment Quarter became *this*! It is a form on its way to becoming personal lyric; nevertheless, we must imagine a performance context, in which the singer performs Liu Yong. The lost world of parties is the only community; throughout the rest of the song, other people are contained only on boats, seen as specks of lantern-light or heard as passing noises. The noise startles him awake from a "fine dream"—a dream of the lost community—to confront his isolation.

Even the happy scenes of travel revert to loss. The new world he enters inevitably makes him feel the loss of the old. The giggling young girls of the Southland, avoiding the intrusion of this perhaps elderly stranger, are both alluring and alienating, leading him to thoughts of a woman in the capital and what she represented in the past. We cannot help wondering if the beloved left in the capital had a name, or if she was as "generic" as the participants in the love game in the Entertainment Quarter.

To "Yeban yue" 夜半樂³²

凍雲黯淡天氣，扁舟一葉，乘興離江渚。度萬壑千巖，越溪深處。
 怒濤漸息，樵風乍起，更聞商旅相呼。
 片帆高舉，泛畫鷁、翩翩過南浦。
 望中酒旆閃閃，一簇煙村，數行霜樹。殘日下，漁人鳴榔歸去。
 敗荷零落，衰楊掩映，岸邊兩兩三三，浣紗遊女。
 避行客、含羞笑相語。
 到此因念，繡閣輕拋，浪萍難駐。
 歎後約丁寧竟何據。慘離懷，空恨歲晚歸期阻。
 凝淚眼、杳杳神京路。斷鴻聲遠長天暮。

32. Tang Guizhang 1999, 47; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 155.

Frozen clouds, dark and gloomy weather,
a leaf of a tiny boat
going with my whim leaves the river isle.
Crossing past
 thousands of ravines and cliffs
 and deep-set spots on a creek in Yue.
Raging billows gradually come to rest,
a woodsman's breeze begins to rise,
now I hear the traveling merchants shouting back and forth.
Sail raised high,
my painted prow rides the water,
winging fleetly past the southern shore.
Tavern banners flash in my view,
a misty village clumped together,
several rows of frosty trees.
And as the dying sunlight sinks,
the clack of the fishermen's sticks going home.
Ruined lotuses withered and fallen,
leaf-stripped willows half hide
by twos and threes on the bank,
girls out washing gossamer.
Avoiding the traveler,
they talk to each other, shyly giggling.
At this point I come to brood
on the finely wrought chamber so lightly left behind,
a duckweed adrift that cannot stop.
And I sigh that the time we set to meet, so earnestly urged, proved
 unreliable at last.
Thoughts of our separation sadden me,
and I helplessly resent how, as the year grows late,
 I am blocked from return.
Tears well in my eyes, fixed on the road to the capital faint in the
 distance.
The voice of the swan, lost from the flock, far
 in the vast skies of twilight.

As fine as the first two stanzas are, it is hard to feel entirely satisfied with this now famous lyric. This new genre brilliantly intrudes into a territory that had been the domain of classical poetry, representing

it with special gifts. It sails along confidently until it encounters those lovely, giggling peasant girls, the legacy of the poetic image of the Southland.

A two-stanza *xiaoling* could stop at this point; but this is a three-stanza *manci*; it must go on. And at this moment both the lyricist and the genre are thrown back to their past: the lost urban world that was their home, as well as the sophisticated beloved of the Entertainment Quarter. Here it is hard not to recall Qu Yuan, about to ascend to the heavens, then looking back on the great city that was his home.

Classical poetry was based on isometric couplets, each internally complete. However strictly determined by the tune pattern, the irregularity of song lyric, particularly of *manci*, punctuated by rhymes no longer tied to couplets could seem to imitate the motions of speech or experience. It seemed in some way liberated from the strict, architectural order of classical poetry.

The gift of form, entering classical poetry's realm of landscape description, is beautifully captured in the opening of this lyric, with its large mass of immobile "frozen cloud," a gloomy stasis of the atmosphere in which the tiny boat sets out downstream. In poetic Chinese a small cloud, especially one breaking off a larger mass, was called a "cloud-leaf" (*yunye* 雲葉), as "leaf" was also a poetic measure word for a small boat. This is visually breaking free of stasis, described as "going with my whim" (*chengxing* 乘興), the phrase that evokes freedom of action by its association with the fourth-century eccentric Wang Huizhi, who thought of his friend Dai Kui on a snowy night and went off to Shan in a small boat to visit him. The theme of Shan is picked up later by the "creek in Yue." In the same way that Wang Huizhi turned back upon reaching Dai's home, explaining that he came "going with his whim" and that now his whim was gone, Liu Yong figuratively turns back to longing for the capital once he reaches the poetically idyllic world of Yue.

The small "leaf-boat" detaches itself from the gloom and from two immobile masses, the clouds and the island, and moves into the current. Such movement, set in motion by impulse and "whim," imparts a sense of liberation. The foregrounded figure of the tiny boat continues to move freely and unencumbered through the surrounding masses, the

"thousands of ravines and cliffs," in an epic journey of unmarked time, until at last he reaches "a deep-set spot on a creek in Yue." Wang Huizhi is not the only precursor for such a journey: Xi Shi, one of the most beautiful women in Chinese history, was first discovered at a "creek in Yue" washing gossamer. Her discoverer, Fan Li, helped his ruler, the King of Yue, destroy the neighboring kingdom of Wu by providing him with Xi Shi to dote on; then, refusing reward, he set off to sail the rivers and lakes. As the legend evolved, Fan Li took Xi Shi with him. These are not so much "allusions" as cultural echoes of a charmed world, as goes with the term "greenwood" in English.

At last the boat, no longer framed by a monumental landscape but set in a more intimate scene, slows down.

Raging billows gradually come to rest,
 a woodsman's breeze begins to rise,
 now I hear the traveling merchants shouting back and forth.
 Sail raised high,
 my painted prow rides the water
 winging fleetly past the southern shore.

Things slow down. People appear, rustics and river merchants stand on the shores. (Should we remember that Fan Li, before setting off to sail the lakes, became a merchant?) His boat's motion is measured not by passing "thousands of ravines and cliffs," but by fixed objects on the nearby shore. We need to mention that the "southern shore" poetically evokes parting and separation, anticipating the final stanza.

In the second stanza the tavern signs (painted on banners) lead his attention to a village, where he sees fishermen turning home for the evening, still beating the sticks they use to drive fish toward the nets. The culminating scene is of the shy local beauties, giggling, half-hidden by the leafless trees, luring him to greater intimacy.

"At this point I come to brood" (*daoci yin nian* 到此因念): this is the moment of reversal in the lyric, going from looking ahead to memory, from the giggling girls of Yue to someone left behind in Bianjing, from a new world for song lyric back to an older, more familiar world. "At this point" refers, of course, not just to the idyllic scene in Yue but the

beginning of the final stanza, where the lyricist has to get his business done. The forward momentum goes retrograde. The giggling beauties of Yue (*younü* 游女, girls out wandering around, rather than staying in the women's chambers) are replaced by metonymic reference to the loved one in the capital, the "finely wrought chamber" (*xiuge* 繡閣), an interior scene replacing the outdoor scene. The exhilarating escape from deadening stasis in the beginning is replaced by regret at leaving the beloved, "so lightly left behind"; and the joy of travel becomes the moribund metaphor of the rootless water-plant, "a duckweed adrift that cannot stop." The initial "leaving" (*li* 離) becomes thoughts on "separation" (*li*). The sense of liberty becomes blockage, preventing his timely return. Once his impulse had dissipated, Wang Huizhi turned around and went home. But Liu Yong finds that he cannot go back. With his turn to gaze backward, the first two stanzas are inverted.

Liu Yong has gotten himself into a bind, and the only thing he can do at the end is give up his new poetics of *manqi* and offer a line that could have come from classical poetry, a conventional "poetic" image: "The voice of the swan, lost from the flock, far in the vast skies of twilight." What had been liberation is now a distant voice of the fellow creature cut off from its own kind.

Up to this point we have been trying to hold onto the name "Liu Yong," belonging to a historical author. Now, however, everything splits up. The split may have been in Liu Yong's actual works or in the earliest version of the collection, but we cannot help but raise the possibility that such a split was intensified by songs added to the collection, additions that confirmed his evolving image as a rake. On one side we find Liu Sanbian, Liu Yong's original name, a hero in later vernacular fiction and the very representative of a counterculture that was emergent in the Song. A number of songs in *Yuezhang ji* have clear counterparts in Yuan *sanqu* 散曲 (vernacular songs). We cannot know if Liu Yong did the first version, did a version of a song type popular in the Entertainment Quarter, or was the unwitting recipient of such a song because someone believed that it "must have been composed by Liu Yong."

On the other side, less often acknowledged, Liu Yong was the ancestor of a long generation of *manqi* writers, from Su Shi to the generation

of elite song lyricists born between 1045 and 1056. As they were growing up Liu Yong was the sole dominant figure in *manci*. Because the model of his lyrics was so often repeated and because the stylistic level was changed in the process, his dominant model is not acknowledged—indeed the other lyricists often sneered at his diction.

As we will see, one need not look far into the corpus of lyrics from the second half of the eleventh century to see variations on Liu Yong's characteristic landscape description in his travel lyrics. But in a broader sense, the song lyric tradition was built on commonplace themes, allowing a range of variation. Perhaps himself drawing on the lost repertoire of song types in the Entertainment Quarter, Liu Yong often stands at the beginning of these types, the songs of the rake and the songs of the traveler, in the textual record.

We might look at a set, beginning with the first of a pair of lyrics to "Kan hua hui" 看花回:³³

屈指勞生百歲期。榮瘁相隨。
利牽名惹逡巡過，奈兩輪、玉走金飛。
紅顏成白髮，極品何為。
塵事常多雅會稀。忍不開眉。
畫堂歌管深深處，難忘酒盞花枝。
醉鄉風景好，攜手同歸。

Count up your hundred-year span, weighed down with life.
Glory and ruin come in succession.
Temptations of fortune, the lure of fame, pass in a moment,
and you can't stop those two discs,
the jade racing, the gold flying.³⁴
A rosy complexion becomes white hair,
what's the point of being at the top?
Always too many messy problems,
fine gatherings are rare.
How can you keep yourself from a smile?
Deep, deep within the painted hall, piping and song,

33. Tang Guizhang 1999, 23; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 39; Hightower, "The Songwriter Liu Yung," part 2, 60.

34. The jade hare is the moon, while the golden crow is the sun.

a goblet of ale and a spray of flowers I can't forget.³⁵
 The scenery's fine in the land of drunkenness,
 hand in hand we go there together.

This is the Entertainment Quarter's counterpart of the encouragement to drink and make merry, written in *xiaoling* and performed at an official's banquet. Don't worry about passing the examination and rising through the official ranks; just enjoy yourself.

Du Anshi 杜安世 also begins by reckoning up the years of his life and encouraging his listeners not to worry about "getting to the top." He makes a gracious bow to the imperial peace because it permits him to be lazy, then says, "Let the party go on." The lyric is to "Feng qi wu" 鳳棲梧:³⁶

閑把浮生細思算。百歲光陰，夢裏銷除半。
 白首為郎休浩嘆。偷安自喜身強健。
 多少英賢禪聖旦。一個非才，深謝容疏懶。
 席上清歌珠一串。莫教歡會輕分散。

Idly I take this drifting life
 and reckon it up carefully.
 A time span of a hundred years,
 and I've spent half of it in dreams.
 Cease to heave deep sighs
 at becoming a junior courtier with white hair.³⁷
 Stealing some peace, I'm delighted
 that my body is sturdy and strong.
 So many sparkling men of worth
 assist our ruler's day.³⁸
 A guy without talent
 is deeply grateful to be allowed to be lazy.

35. The "spray of flowers" is the woman.

36. Tang Guizhang 1999, 237. For Du Anshi, see "Other Xiaoling Lyricists" in Chapter 5, "The Xiaoling Collections (II)."

37. A reference to the Western Han figure Feng Tang 馮唐, who was asked why he was an old man still in an entry-level court post.

38. *Shengdan* 聖旦 is later the ruler's birthday and may be used in this sense here, of a celebratory occasion.

Clear songs at the party,
 pearls on a string.³⁹
 Don't let this merry gathering
 disperse too casually.

Su Shi is said to have made some disparaging remarks about Liu Yong's style, but for someone writing *manci* in Su Shi's generation, Liu Yong was effectively the only famous name in *manci* from an earlier generation. Su Shi wanted to radically transform the genre and succeeded; but everywhere Su Shi's song lyrics show the traces—from phrases to whole songs—of Liu Yong, the genre's past. One of Su Shi's lyrics to "Manting fang" 滿庭芳 is a brilliant transformation of Liu Yong's "Kan hua hui." The most obvious difference here is that Su Shi keeps the ale but eliminates the woman.⁴⁰

蝸角虛名，蠅頭微利，算來著甚幹忙。事皆前定，誰弱又誰強。
 且趁閑身未老，盡放我、些子疏狂。百年裏，渾教是醉，三萬六千場。
 思量。能幾許，憂愁風雨，一半相妨，又何須，抵死說短論長。
 幸對清風皓月，苔茵展、雲幕高張。江南好，千鐘美酒，一曲滿庭芳。

Hollow fame won on a snail's horns,
 on a fly's head some small advantage gained:
 when I reckon it up, why
 do we go to such pointless trouble?
 Everything that happens
 has been settled long before—
 no one comes out short,
 no one comes out ahead.
 So I'll make the most of my leisure,
 and the fact I'm not yet too old,
 and indulge myself to my limit
 in a little wildness.
 In life's possible hundred years
 you should let yourself get drunk in total
 thirty-six thousand times.

39. A reference to song.

40. Tang Guizhang 1999, 359; Zou and Wang, 458.

I have considered it,
 and how much longer do we have—
 with gloomy winds and rain
 keeping us from half?
 Also why should we
 spend the rest of our lives arguing
 over what's better, what's worse?
 We are lucky to have a cool breeze
 and also the silvery moon,
 a cushion of moss spread for us,
 a tent of cloud stretched high.
 The Southland is best,
 a thousand cups of sweet ale,
 and a song: "Fragrance Fills the Yard."

He "reckons"; he counts the days (as the days of possibly getting drunk, from Li Bai); in place of rejecting worry about rising in office, he says he doesn't want to spend the rest of his life worrying about problems; and he concludes with the idyllic scene of drunkenness and song.

We are struck by the images of the "snail's horns" and "fly's head," the first drawn from *Zhuangzi* concerning two warring kingdoms situated across from each other, on the right and left horns of a snail. The source of the "fly's head" is less certain, but it also suggests pettiness.⁴¹ The pairing of "snail's horn" and "fly's head" probably has some earlier usage somewhere, but the earliest precedent usage in literary works, both prose and poetry, is in the second stanza of Liu Yong's "Feng gui yun" 鳳歸雲:⁴²

驅驅行役，冉冉光陰，蠅頭利祿，蝸角功名，畢竟成何事，漫相高。
 拋擲雲泉，狎玩塵土，壯節等閒消。
 幸有五湖煙浪，一船風月，會須歸去老漁樵。

Galloping onward in service,
 time gradually moving on,
 advantage and salary on a fly's head,

41. Compare the identification of the allusion by Zou and Wang, 460, and Gu Zhijing, 466.

42. Tang Guizhang 1999, 56–57; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 205.

on a snail's horns glory and fame,
in the end what does it amount to?—
for nothing it's thought grand.
I cast behind my stream in the clouds,
and dallied in the world's dirt
heedlessly letting youth's values melt away.
But fortunately there are the misty waves of the Five Lakes,
a single boat in the moonlight and breeze,
and I will surely go off to grow old among fishermen and woodcutters.

This is yet another variation on the possible choices that are alternatives to a public career. The pattern is the same. Su Shi's genius was not in being completely original, but in writing so perfectly that his sources went unnoticed.

Lyric had its own world, building upon and transforming earlier song. It certainly drew on classical poetry; but the family of song lyric was primary. Too often scholars quote an allusion to classical poetry, ignoring the repeated use of the phrase in earlier song lyric. What seems to be an erudite reference is actually a lyric commonplace. And, at least for the rich world of song lyric in the second half of the eleventh century, no presence was as large as Liu Yong's.

FOUR

The Xiaoling Collections (I)

We have four books that originated from the *xiaoling* practice of the mid-eleventh century. This was not the song practice of the Entertainment Quarter, but songs for parties of officials. Although these collections were compiled because of their famous "authors," each presents problems that make it more useful for us to think of them as books. The first of these books, *Yangchun ji*, hangs on the name of the eminent Southern Tang figure Feng Yansi. It was collected from unknown sources, with a 1058 preface by Chen Shixiu. The earliest source of this collection of lyrics has a very high percentage of lyrics (almost 30 percent) that appear elsewhere under other names. Some of the material is clearly from the Southern Tang court of the tenth century, but other lyrics also appear under the names of Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu, the two most prominent *xiaoling* lyricists of the mid-eleventh century.¹

The second book is the *Zhuyu ci* 珠玉詞, representing Yan Shu. Here too we know neither the sources nor the time of its compilation. Some version of this collection is said to have had a preface by Yan Shu's friend Zhang Xian, which has been subsequently lost.² Like *Yangchun ji*, it was probably a product of the third quarter of the eleventh century.

1. For a fuller discussion of the formation of the collection, see Chapter 1, "Early Circulation."

2. Prefaces are not usually lost. It is unclear what the absence of the Zhang Xian preface says about the early form of the collection as compared to the version we have in *Baijia ci*.

The last two books are imprints from the late twelfth century (or, in one case, perhaps from the early thirteenth century) and derive from the collection of Ouyang Xiu's lyrics, which was circulating under different titles and perhaps in different versions. Both books are sizable; but if we exclude lyrics attributed to others elsewhere, the books have only eighty-six uncontested lyrics in common.

A fifth collection, that of the long-lived Zhang Xian, in part represents the same community, but it also contains many *manzi* in the emergent social style of the 1060s and 1070s, composed in Zhang Xian's old age.

Each of these books is distinct in its own way, and there are moments in each lyric collection that invite us to think about the style of an individual author. Chinese criticism, both pre-modern and modern, has always been author-centered and has tried hard to characterize such differences. However, on levels both stylistic and bibliographical, a large proportion of the lyrics in these collections are in the same style (or styles), so much so that the same lyrics often appear under other names in other collections, and we cannot tell a mid-tenth century song from a mid-eleventh century one.

Such multiple attributions have encouraged a perhaps over-refined connoisseurship that judges lyric A to have been written by author X and not by author Y. The first thing we must note about such judgments is that if we did not have lyric A in the collection by X, the critic would immediately accept it as having been written by Y and would integrate it into his understanding of lyricist Y. Although counting is less straightforward than it might seem, in the collections of Feng Yansi, Yan Shu, and Ouyang Xiu, between 20 and 30 percent of the lyrics in the source editions have multiple attributions.³ Feng Yansi's collection shares many texts with *Huajian ji*, as well as with mid-eleventh century Song

3. I am expanding on the argument made in Chapter 1. Since modern editions are often based on Ming and Qing editions, which have been edited, with poems added and subtracted, it is important to go back to the earliest editions that still carry the traces of the original form. In the case of Feng Yansi and Yan Shu I have followed the fifteenth-century *Tang Song mingxian baijia ci* 唐宋名賢百家詞 (here referred to simply as *Baijia ci*) editions of Wu Ne 吳訥, which may in part derive from the Southern Song *Baijia ci*. See Wang Zhaopeng 2004, 105–15.

lyricists, while the Song *xiaoling* lyricists overlap mainly with each other and other Song lyricists (as well as Feng).⁴

This leads to another troubling issue. Allowing that Feng Yansi was a tenth-century lyricist, when the first *xiaoling* collections were being compiled, probably in the third quarter of the eleventh century, there were only a few famous *xiaoling* writers on whose name one could hang a lyric: Feng Yansi, Yan Shu, Zhang Xian, and Ouyang Xiu (sometimes *xiaoling* in Liu Yong's collection enter this company).⁵ There are relatively few lyrics of this type attributed to others. It is difficult to believe that, among the number of *xiaoling* circulating in the mid-eleventh century, all could be securely attributed to one of those names. In short, even among the lyrics that appear in only one collection, we probably have a significant number whose author was unknown or whose actual author was replaced by a more famous name.

We must imagine the moment when the world of the singer encounters the world of the scholar. The singer knows a song; perhaps she has a manuscript songbook with words but no author; perhaps the songbook has names, but we don't know on what authority the attributions were made. The literary man at the banquet asks, "Who wrote that?" As with many of the songs we ourselves know, it is not a question that is necessarily on the singer's mind when she performs. She can answer that she does not know—as some probably did not. The questioner takes this as her ignorance. He hears the lyrics again and asks a different singer, who chooses the name that seems right: "This was composed by Feng Yansi." The literary man is satisfied because he has found someone who "knows the answer" to his question.

The point at which these names attached to our books meet is in the person of Yan Shu. A "child prodigy" (*shentong* 神童), Yan Shu passed the *jinshi* examination at age fifteen and was a major figure in

4. The general absence of *Huajian ji* lyrics in multiple attributions in the *xiaoling* collections of Song lyricists suggests that, unlike Feng Yansi's lyrics, these were not part of contemporary performance practice.

5. Zhang Xian is a special case that we will consider later, in Chapter 5; the multiple attributions in his collection are far fewer. Not only does Zhang Xian's collection have a significantly smaller percentage of multiple attributions, but many of his lyrics have occasional subtitles. Subtitles tie the lyric to the time of production, and were important in transforming the genre from repeatable song to a regime of authorship.

the political world of the first half of the eleventh century. The inevitable "exiles" that any political figure suffered were, for Yan Shu, to good provincial postings relatively near the capital. The emperor, Renzong, was fond of him; and he spent most of his career in very good posts in the central government. Those he recommended and for whom he served as patron in various ways were major political and literary figures of the mid-eleventh century, including Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989–1052), Ouyang Xiu, and Zhang Xian.

Yan Shu was famous for his parties, at which song lyrics were performed while drinks were served. We know that Zhang Xian was often his guest, and it is hard not to imagine Fan Zhongyan and Ouyang Xiu as occasional visitors.⁶ Although groups engaged in the crafting of classical poetry had already formed around Song political figures, Yan Shu was the first such figure to be associated with song lyric. No doubt singers performed their familiar songs at all parties. But Yan Shu should be recognized as the pivotal figure who made the composition of song lyric a legitimate possibility in the discursive practice of the upper echelon of officialdom.

This adventure was his fate. Yan Shu's once huge collection of classical poetry and prose has been almost entirely lost; only the collection of his songs survives. The same is true of Zhang Xian.

Yan Shu also links the older lyricist Feng Yansi to this network of song lyric circulation among officialdom. In a comment in *Zhongshan's Remarks on Poetry* (*Zhongshan shihua* 中山詩話), Liu Bin 劉攽 (1022–88) notes that Yan Shu was particularly fond of the lyrics of Feng Yansi.⁷ This is not Southern Song gossip, but rather a comment by a younger contemporary of Yan Shu, well acquainted with those who attended Yan Shu's famous parties and perhaps a guest at such parties himself. Since Chen Shixiu speaks of having to gather together scattered lyrics a few years after Yan Shu's death, Feng Yansi's lyrics may have been included in circulating "songbooks" of lyrics, such as *Jiayan ji*, or simply passed on in the repertoires of singers.

6. Although anecdotes say Yan Shu came to dislike Ouyang Xiu, they also note that Ouyang Xiu visited him. Ding Chuanjing 丁傳靖, *Songren yishi huibian* 宋人軼事彙編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 289.

7. Wu Wenzhi, 1:448.

It is unclear which of Feng Yansi's lyrics Yan Shu knew. They can, however, serve as something of a background of the older song tradition still in circulation, whose large presence gave us the marked term "new lyrics" (*xinci* 新詞).

As noted above, roughly thirty percent of the 118 lyrics in the oldest edition of *Yangchun ji* are also attributed to other lyricists, sometimes to several others. We will assume that the lyrics shared with the *Huajian ji* of 940 are certainly not by Feng, suggesting his role as a famous name in lyric on which to hang a song. The attributions shared with his Southern Tang contemporaries Li Jing and Li Yu, as well as the lyrics shared with Yan Shu, Ouyang Xiu, and other mid-eleventh century lyricists, are all uncertain, suggesting the continuity of his style. Some types of banquet lyrics are significantly more prominent in Yan Shu's collection than in the collection of Feng Yansi, but the attributions shared between the two collections are so much like other lyrics in either collection that it is impossible to decide which lyricist has the stronger claim in the shared attributions.

In terms of gender the social order is certain: the singers were women, and the authors of the lyrics were presumed to be men. Gender within the lyrics themselves is more variable. The speaker in the *Huajian ji* lyrics is usually marked as female. Less often, the speaker is marked as male. Some lyrics assume the role of an external observer unmarked by gender (though suggesting male voyeurism). Sometimes the gender of the speaker is indeterminate. By comparison, *Yangchun ji* frequently has lyrics whose speaker could be a man or a woman. The earlier poetic world usually presumed a radical difference between the feelings of men and women. The woman stayed awake longing for the absent man; the man was often elsewhere having a good time. In the mid-tenth century we see the "romantic" feelings of men and women as generally interchangeable. Sometimes it is the woman longing for the absent man, but we also see the man longing for the absent woman—and in many lyrics there is no distinction. When we enter the discourse of longing and desire, however, the *society* of males virtually disappears from representation (even though it is the intended audience); there are only two people, a man and a woman. It extends beyond that to a larger discourse of sensibility, defined against the male *public* world.

Assuming that Feng Yansi's name was one of those that stood at the center of the received song tradition may give us a more profound understanding of Yan Shu's lyrics. We cannot reach that world, but we can use what we know to frame our speculation. Imagine one of Yan Shu's parties in the eleventh century: it is a scene that deserves some reflection. Senior officials, some of the most powerful men in the empire, are present. Younger men are, no doubt, included; but the partygoers are primarily men in their thirties to sixties. Yan Shu's household singers are young women probably all in their teens—sometimes their early teens.

Although it is an occasion for leisure, we suspect that among the men gossip will be exchanged, political developments will be discussed, and a certain amount of public business will be conducted. The performance of song accompanies drinking, probably observing some abbreviated form of Tang drinking rituals—a peculiar form of ritual order framing the propensity to the disorder of inebriation. If the singers are performing older songs, the guests might hear something like this:⁸

Feng Yansi, to "Que ta zhi" 鵲踏枝

梅花繁枝千萬片，猶自多情，學雪隨風轉。
昨夜笙歌容易散，酒醒添得愁無限。
樓上春山寒四面，過盡征鴻，暮景煙深淺。
一晌憑欄人不見，紅綃掩淚思量遍。⁹

Branches thick with plum blossoms,
millions of petals,
still too filled with passion,
they imitate snowflakes whirling with the breeze.
Last night's song and piping
dispersed so easily,
when the ale wore off there was added
boundless sorrow.

From the upper storey spring mountains
appear cold in every direction,
the migrating swans have all passed by,

8. Huang Jinde, 1. The text follows Wu Ne's edition.

9. Reading 紅/鮫 with Wu Ne.

a twilight scene, mist faint and opaque.
 I lean on the railing for a while,
 no one seen,
 with red silk I wipe away tears
 and think over the whole thing.

Custom would tell the listener that the undefined concerns of the speaker in the song involve a relationship between a man and a woman. The song is not clear about whether a man or a woman is speaking. A guest at the party can comfortably hear this "as" a woman speaker, but if they have heard Liu Yong's songs, or songs by their host Yan Shu, they know a man can feel the same thing.

The older lyrics and the classical poetic treatments tended to be more explicit that unhappiness was due to separation. That could be assumed here, but it is nowhere stated. One could find it in the alternative interpretation of *ren bu jian*, "the person is not seen," rather than "no one to be seen."

Flowers falling from the branches were poetically figured as feminine. The white plum blossoms were always compared to snow because they blossomed in the snow-covered ground of late winter and early spring.

The song presents a scene of both great intensity and complete indeterminacy: we do not know any of the details—who is speaking, where the person is situated, what happened, or why. Such indeterminacy helps to detach the representation from the experience of a historical author and to make it available to any listener—and to any future singer. As song lyric matures later in the eleventh century and is increasingly drawn into the social occasions of classical poetry, the indeterminacy of song lyric diminishes, with occasional titles added to the tune title and frequent internal references to specifics of the occasion of performance or composition.

The second point to note is that interiority is largely represented in the sensuous world, with primarily observable things—blossoms, snow, mountains, swans. We see someone wiping away tears. When we have explicit expressions of emotion such as "boundless sorrow," it begs a cause or object—sorrow about what? When he/she thinks it over thoroughly,

we do not know what he/she is thinking over. Sorrow—even “boundless sorrow”—might be free-floating, without a cause; but thinking something over needs an object. The young singer probably knits her brows and may squeeze out a few tears to streak her rouge, but the melancholy and inebriate middle-aged listener may hear his own case and weep a few tears of his own.

Perhaps most important, the guests came to the party with their minds full of questions about who was to be promoted, what so-and-so said, and with whom the emperor was displeased. Here, in the world of song from the lips of a pretty young woman, is a space where none of that matters. There is only passionate (if undefined) feeling and a scene that resonates with such feeling.

That scene of song is here, as often, in the aftermath of a party. The speaker does not simply go back to everyday concerns of, for example, who is going to be promoted. Something about the party binds him/her either to someone else at the party or to an absent love. If we wonder why song lyrics gradually became so popular, this is part of the answer: songs constructed a space figuratively “outside the empire,” or a space for the self in which the empire was irrelevant and unmentioned.

As public figures accustomed to uttering public pieties, the guests might hear such a song and say: “Feng Yansi, a minister of state, was too absorbed in private affairs—that is why the Southern Tang fell.” That is always one possible reading, and it was a common style of judgment in the Song. In many ways such an interpretation was the index of what seemed to be at stake: the empire will fall if its servants escape the priority of the empire’s claims even for a brief moment. That is a hole in the empire. Yet those same desires were present in the critics themselves as well. Trying to detain a high official at a party, Yan Shu does not invoke the passion of lost love, but he gestures to that world of sensibility, defined by what it rejects and excludes.¹⁰

Yan Shu, to “Huan xi sha” 浣溪沙

楊柳陰中駐彩旌。芰荷香裏勸金觥。小詞流入管弦聲。
只有醉吟寬別恨，不須朝暮促歸程。雨條煙葉繫人情。

10. Tang Guizhang 1999, 114; Zhang Caoren, 30.

In the shadow of the willows
 halt your brightly colored pennons,"
 amid the scent of water-chestnuts and lotus leaves
 I urge the golden flagon on you,
 a short lyric flows into
 the notes of pipes and strings.
 There is only drunken chanting
 to ease the pain of parting,
 no need, dawn and evening,
 to hurry your homeward schedule—
 rainy branches and misty leaves
 catch up human feelings.

Why do "rainy branches and misty leaves catch up human feelings"? Only in the world of song lyric do they have such a power, defined against official schedules—usually they just mean that the poor official has to slog his way through a wet landscape. The song, the lyrics composed by the host but sung by a young woman holding a goblet of ale and urging him to drink, is a seduction, recalling what one loses in life by being a dutiful servant of the empire—a figurative "lost love" in which the feeling of the moment creates an enclosed space that excludes the empire, the world of officialdom, and a scheduled life.

The Song was a world uncomfortably familiar to us, in which one's value as a person was defined by what one did, what one accomplished, and how one behaved. Far more than in the Tang, Yan Shu's world needed song lyrics as a separate space to live in, if only for a brief while.

Types of *Xiaoling*

Although taxonomy—especially binary taxonomy—is fraught with problems, on a preliminary level it is useful to distinguish two basic types of *xiaoling* in this period. One type addresses the immediate audience, describing the scene at hand and urging guests, either directly or indirectly,

11. The insigniae of a high official traveling.

to drink and have a good time. The second type sets an erotic mood by telling about some moment in a conventional love narrative. Sometimes this type describes a situation, and sometimes it is a vignette—though the difference between a “situation” and a “vignette” is an uncertain one and blurs along the boundary. Although there are a number of lyrics that do not fall into either group, these two categories constitute a significant percentage of extant lyrics. The collections of different lyricists have varying proportions of these two types, but they all contain both.

The variations of moments in the love narrative are by far the most complex.¹² The most common scene is the woman lying awake at night longing for the absent man, and the repertoire of situations grew as lyricists troped on such commonplace scenes. The audience for such lyrics had heard a great many variations and understood the situation that was evoked indirectly.

If the woman longing for the absent man was perhaps the most conventional situation, then the man longing for the absent woman was an obvious inversion. We see this often in Liu Yong's lyrics, where the man is the traveler who has abandoned his beloved in the capital. Or suppose the man is waiting for the woman to come, suggesting an illicit liaison, as in this lyric by Zhang Xian:¹³

Zhang Xian, to “Pusa man” 菩薩蠻

夜深不至春蟾見。令人更更情飛亂。翠幕動風亭。時疑響屢聲。
花香聞水榭。幾誤飄衣麝。不忍下朱扉。繞廊重待伊。

Deep in the night she does not come,
the spring moon appears.
From each hour to hour it makes a person's
feelings fly in confusion.
The kingfisher hanging stirs in a breeze-catching pavilion.
Then I suspect it is the sound of her echoing clogs.
The fragrance of flowers is whiffed in the kiosk by the water.
I often mistake it for the musk wafting from her clothes.
I cannot bring myself to bar the red door.
And again I circle the veranda waiting for her.

12. Bryant 1982 (xxxvii–xl) gives a nice summary.

13. Tang Guizhang 1999, 73; Wu and Shen, 96.

The translation above would immediately invite a heated debate among lovers of song lyric. One side would say that it is always the woman who leaves the door unbarred awaiting her lover, as Yingying did. Therefore the pronouns should be reversed: the speaker is the woman. The other side would point out the numerous examples of women coming to meet their lovers in the man's quarters and observe that the scent of clothing is usually associated with women—especially when it is confused with the scent of flowers. Since such an argument cannot be decided, it will continue until we remind the parties in the dispute that they are in the wrong “discourse”—an academic discourse that requires decision when writing, say, an “appreciation” that paraphrases the situation (or an English translation). This is “just a song”; the lovers are in a gender limbo due to conflicting gender codes, with the gender of the speaker to be determined as the listener prefers—if the listener cares to make that determination.

Sometimes moments in the love narrative can be brought into the party itself—always keeping in mind that this does not address the guests, but simply opens up an intersection of the love story and parties like the ones at which the song is performed. What do the guests imagine as the young women singers are doing this?¹⁴

Zhang Xian, to “Ta suo xing” 踏莎行

波湛橫眸，霞分膩臉。盈盈笑動籠香靨。
有情未結風樓歡，無憀愛把歌眉斂。
密意欲傳，嬌羞未敢。斜偎象板還偷瞋。
輕輕試問借人麼，佯佯不覩雲鬟點。

The glances she casts are bewitching,
red aura divided between glossy cheeks.
Her winsome smile stirs dimples imbued with scent.
She has passions, but not yet realized
in the pleasures of the phoenix mansion,
feeling ennui, she loves to make her brows knit when singing.
She wants to convey her secret love,
but, charmingly shy, she does not dare.

14. Tang Guizhang 1999, 74; Wu and Shen, 98. In the second stanza I have followed Wu Xionghé's suggestion that 借 is 者.

She tilts her head, pressing up close to the ivory castanets, then steals a peek.

Very softly she asks: "Is that the guy?"

and, feigning not to notice, a cloudlike hairdo nods.

To the male audience this scene offers a glimpse into the world of the singers, their inner community with its secret passions. Each member of the male audience can have the fantasy that he is the object of the shy young singer's gaze. It is a love game written into a text for serial performance, which gives the servants of the empire a hope that they can experience a different human world for a moment.

The *Yangchun ji*

The *Yangchun ji* contains a number of lyrics making reference to Nanjing and its famous sites, as well as to palaces, suggesting a Southern Tang provenance. However, since a few *Yangchun ji* lyrics share attributions with Li Jing and Li Yu, we can be certain only of their origin in Southern Tang court culture.

One lyric encourages a new examination graduate to drink, while other lyrics wish a banqueter long life and health—these are the kinds of lyrics that would be a standard part of any singer's repertoire.¹⁵ Although there are no conflicting attributions, it is exceedingly hard to imagine Feng Yansi writing them, and they remain in the collection as a monument to Chen Shixiu's gullibility. The vast majority of the lyrics are about relationships, about lovers being together or apart. Gender markers dispose us to understand these as the relationship between a man and a woman, and in many cases the speaker could be either the man or the woman.

Our version of *Yangchun ji* shaped a sense of what a Feng Yansi lyric "should be." The term "new lyrics" (*xinci* 新詞) is used twice by Yan Shu

15. These three lyrics are: to "Ye jinmen" 謁金門 (聖明世), Huang Jinde, 89; to "Changming nü" 長命女 (春日宴), Huang Jinde, 114; to "Paoqiu yue" 拋球樂 (年少王孫有俊才), Huang Jinde, 130.

and once by Ouyang Xiu, so the Feng Yansi lyrics are representative "old lyrics" (*jiuci* 舊詞). They sound familiar, and one thinks one has heard them before. They are a norm.

To call them "normative" may be a nice way to say they are commonplace or "banal." Many of the lyrics in *Yangchun ji* are indeed banal. The aesthetics of banality has been a topic of discussion in recent critical discourse; however, the banality of the tenth and eleventh centuries may have a different weight.

Our usual view is that in literature, repetition is bad and innovation is good, but we might reflect on the significance of banality. Banality clearly involves habitual familiarity; it is not exact repetition but a carefully circumscribed and easy variability in which we recognize the familiar. The familiar image also has to make a grand claim, a claim of the intensely singular or exceptional that is belied by its repetitive familiarity.

The passionate speakers who lie awake night after night and gaze off into the distance day after day fit our simple criteria of banality. The poetic motif is an old one, with a predictable range of variation. And yet we cannot help noticing the homology between wearying repetition in banality and the thematic repetitiveness of the figure's claim of passion (night after night, day after day, spring after spring). For the individual, as for the poetic motif, time is passing and the same responses keep coming.

Some songs not only depend on the banality of repetition, but they thematize repetition. Repetition that recognizes itself is no longer simple repetition, but it is repetition articulated, voiced, framed. No less banal, it is a self-conscious banality, one that sees its own boundaries and can imagine escape. The very fact that we repeat when we know better makes the compulsion to repetition seem some external or internal force, beyond our control. And such compulsion is indeed a consistent motif in the banal lyrics.

Feng Yansi, to "Que ta zhi"¹⁶

花外寒鷄天欲曙。香印成灰，起坐渾無緒。
檐際高桐凝宿霧。捲簾雙鵲驚飛去。

16. Huang Jinde, 12.

屏上羅衣閑繡縷。一晌關情。憶遍江南路。
夜夜夢魂休謾語。已知前事無尋處。

Cockcrow in the cold beyond the flowers,
the heavens about to brighten.
The incense imprint has turned to ash,
getting up, I feel general ennui.
At the edge of the eaves in the high tung tree
last night's fog hangs fixed,
as I roll up the curtains, a magpie pair
flies off startled.
Gossamer clothes hung over the screen,
threads from idle embroidery.
For a moment the heart is touched,
recalling traveling over all the roads of the Southland.
Cease these futile words of the soul in dream
night after night—
I already know that what happened before
is nowhere to be found again.

The dream of "traveling over all the roads of the Southland" was originally from a Cen Shen quatrain about dreaming of the female beloved, but it had been so thoroughly assimilated into poetic discourse that it referred simply to dreaming of the beloved of either gender. The "gossamer clothes" are the only clear gender marker. This suggests a woman persona, but may sometimes refer to the clothes left behind by the beloved woman.

Here we have a glimpse of the profound core of banality, and the pain of longing in that glimpse is one of the forces that drives the *xiaoling* genre. Ritual is efficacious repetition. Banality is failed repetition that never successfully repeats but keeps trying, and every trial points to the original "what happened before" that can never be found again. And yet one returns to the dream, as to the familiar song, again and again.

"New lyrics" should be new. The "old lyrics" all sound alike, and each one has been repeated over and over again for generations. The singers were probably tired of performing them, and the audience had heard them all before. They are often about loss, and what cannot be recovered even as it is repeated.

Feng Yansi, to "Cai sangzi" 采桑子¹⁷

畫堂昨夜愁無睡，風雨淒淒，林鶻單栖，落盡燈花雞未啼。
年光往事如流水，休說情迷，玉箸雙垂，祇是金籠鸚鵡知。

Last night in the painted hall
I was sleepless from sorrow,
the wind and rain were chill and dreary,
a magpie roosted alone in the woods,
the sparks had all fallen from the lamp-wick,
and the rooster had not yet crowed.
The passing years and what happened before
are like the flowing water.
Speak no more of love's folly.
Tear-tracks hang in pairs,
and only the parrot
in the golden cage knows.

These song lyrics, repeated so often and telling of love's folly (*qingmi*, "losing oneself in love"), frequently issue the command not to talk about it, here declaring that no one knows but the parrot. And perhaps, like the singer, the parrot just repeats the words without understanding the feeling. The song lyric tells of the inaccessible interior, even when the speaker does not speak but just listens to the noisy world outside. The outside world is filled with details, with music and merriment, which have meaning only in relation to the interior life of the silent speaker, whose mind, like his/her eyes, is fixed on the one thing that is out of sight.

Feng Yansi, to "Cai sangzi"¹⁸

馬嘶人語春風岸，芳草綿綿。楊柳橋邊，落日高樓酒旆懸。
舊愁新恨知多少，目斷遙天。獨立花前，更聽笙歌滿畫船。

Horses whinny, people are talking,
a riverbank in spring breeze,
the fragrant plants stretch on and on,
beside a bridge with willows,

17. Huang Jinde, 52.

18. Huang Jinde, 41.

a tall building in setting sunlight,
 and tavern banners hanging.
 Former sorrows and recent resentments,
 do you know how much?—
 eyes gaze to the horizon.
 Standing alone by the flowers,
 while still listening to songs and mouth organs
 filling the painted boats.

Here is another lyric by Feng Yansi in which the visible voyeuristic scene becomes the sign of interior experience that is never made explicit.

Feng Yansi, to "Cai sangzi"¹⁹

畫堂燈暖簾櫳捲，禁漏丁丁。雨罷寒生，一夜西窗夢不成。
 玉娥重起添香印，回倚孤屏。不語含情，水調何人吹笛聲。

The lamp is warm in the painted hall,
 the curtained windows rolled open,
 the drip-drop of the palace water clock.
 As the rain ends, it gets cold,
 and all night long by the western window
 no dream comes.
 The maiden, white as marble, rises often
 to add new cakes of incense,
 turning back, she leans alone by the screen.
 Not speaking, passion kept within—
 who is that playing on the flute
 notes of the "River Song"?

In these two songs the scenes change, but the subject's inner life is fixed on only one thing and is caught by music—here the familiar melody—whose repetition is the outer counterpart of the feeling she keeps within.

At times, however, lyrics in the *Yangchun ji* have the psychologically more developed observations that we typically find in eleventh-century

19. Huang Jinde, 46.

lyrics, and we suspect—but do not know—that we are indeed reading a later lyric.

Feng Yansi, to "Que ta zhi"²⁰

幾度鳳樓同飲宴。此夕相逢，卻勝當時見。
低語前歡頻轉面。雙眉斂恨春山遠。
蠟燭淚流羌笛怨。偷整羅衣，欲唱情猶懶。
醉裏不辭金盞滿。陽關一曲腸千斷。

How many times in the phoenix mansion
have we joined in feasting and drinking?
But meeting here this evening
is even better than seeing her back then.
Speaking softly of our former love,
she often turns her face away.
Her two brows knit with grievance
like spring hills in the distance.
Tears flow from the wax candles,
the Qiang flute plays its reproach.
She stealthily straightens her gossamer gown,
about to sing, but then she's not in the mood.
When drunk she does not turn down
the golden cup brimming full;
that one melody "Yang Pass"
breaks the heart a thousand times.

The motif of meeting an old love at a party is more like Liu Yong than the standard fare of *Yangchun ji*. The narrator is not omniscient but is rather present at the scene as the former lover who watches the woman's behavior closely, trying to read her heart from her expressions and actions. As in the preceding lyrics, it comes at last to music, the song "Yang Pass," always sung at parting, and with this he reads the interior, the heartbreak.

20. Huang Jinde, 22.

The *Zhuyu ci*: Yan Shu

Yan Shu passed away in 1055, three years before Chen Shixiu collected Feng Yansi's lyrics. We know that a collection of Yan Shu's lyrics was compiled within the next two decades, because it had a preface, no longer extant, by Zhang Xian. It is possible (but unlikely) that this collection was made even before the Feng Yansi collection. Whichever is the case, we can begin to date individual collections of song lyrics to early in the second half of the eleventh century. Some version of the Liu Yong collection also seems to have entered circulation in this period.²¹

Yan Shu's collection of lyrics, in some version, was in circulation in the Southern Song.²² Even though we cannot securely credit all the attributions, there is some reason for confidence in this collection. Yan Shu was famous for his parties, at which *xiaoling* were performed, and two decades after his death there still would have been many men alive who had attended those parties, as well as women who had performed at them. The preface-writer, Zhang Xian, had himself been a client of Yan Shu and a participant in those parties. This is purely in the realm of speculation, but the basic collection might have been the repertoire of the household singers (which could account for multiple attributions because not all the pieces in the repertoire need have been composed by Yan Shu himself). In other words, someone may have heard a lyric at one of Yan Shu's parties; and knowing that Yan Shu often composed lyrics, that person may have assumed that the remembered lyric was also by Yan Shu.

The very first lyric in the current version of *Zhuyu ci* suggests that Yan Shu's collection of songs, and his world of song, may have included but also gone beyond Feng Yansi.²³

21. The evidence is very scant here, but lyricists from the last quarter of the eleventh century clearly knew a range of Liu Yong lyrics, including those that were unlikely to have been sung at a party of officials. However, they may have heard his lyrics sung at less official venues.

22. In the editing notes to the late twelfth-century *Jinti yuefu*, the earliest extant scholarly treatment of song lyric, Luo Bi refers to Yan Shu's collection by Yan Shu's name, but to Feng Yansi's lyrics by the name of the collection, given as *Yangchun lu* 陽春錄.

23. Tang Guizhang 1999, 111; Zhang Caoren, 13.

Yan Shu, to "Ye jinmen" 謁金門

秋露墜。滴盡楚蘭紅淚。
 往事舊歡何限意。思量如夢寐。
 人貌老于前歲。風月宛然無異。
 座有嘉賓尊有桂。莫辭終夕醉。

Autumn dew falls.
 It drips away all the red tears of Chu eupatorium.
 What happened before, old loves,
 endless thoughts—
 I think them over as if in a dream.
 The person's looks are older than in years past.
 The breeze and moonlight are no different at all.
 I have fine guests at my party,
 the cups have cinnamon ale.
 Don't refuse to get drunk for the whole evening.

In Feng Yansi's lyrics the others at the party are generally invisible, and if a party is indeed referred to, it has usually already ended. Here, others are not only present, but they are addressed. The speaker can be the male host or the female singer, figured as "Chu eupatorium." The tears are the woman's suffering or the dew on the botanical eupatorium, a late-bloomer. Both the host and the woman singer are older, with a store of "what happened before, old loves." We find a similar nostalgia for old loves and pleasures in the lyrics of Liu Yong, who belonged to roughly the same generation as Yan Shu; but while Liu Yong's nostalgia is a function of his separation from the Bianjing Entertainment Quarter, for Yan Shu it is simply a matter of getting older. We also find this in a few of the lyrics of Feng Yansi, with the recurrent question of their authenticity and date.

The matter-of-fact phrasing of the stanza transition—"The person's looks are older than in years before" (人貌老于前歲)—is a sobering, prosaic self-assessment by the speaker, who is absorbed in memories in the first stanza. "Breeze and moonlight" are both the scene at hand and a standard figure for the world of romance. It is hard not to read this as including the world of song lyric. The feelings are the same; the songs—perhaps lyrics by Feng Yansi—are the same; what is new is the

sense of being older, which frames the same feelings and the songs in a retrospective context.

All this is the perfect set-up for the business of song, and for urging the guests to drink. As the speaker puts those feelings out of his/her mind, so too should the audience. Of course those feelings are not gone; they remain to lend urgency to the pleasure of the moment. Thus in another song the singer urges the guest to take pleasure in the moment:²⁴

Yan Shu, to "Huan xi sha"

一向年光有限身。等閒離別易銷魂。酒筵歌席莫辭頻。
滿目山河空念遠，落花風雨更傷春。不如憐取眼前人。

Only a moment, this season's splendor,
this body, a bounded thing;
to part now as if it didn't matter
easily breaks the heart;
so don't keep on refusing
the party's ale, the banquet's song.
Mountains and rivers fill our eyes, but care
is wasted on things too far;
besides which, this grief at spring passing,
at wind and rain that bring down flowers;
it is better by far to take as your love
the person before your eyes.

We don't know what those "things too far" are on which the addressee is brooding. In the world of song it could be the absent beloved. These are the "eyes gazing to the horizon" while others are having a party in brightly colored boats. With the conventional final line it also echoes "Yingying's Story" ("Yingying zhuan" 鶯鶯傳), which uses the line to persuade someone not to yearn for an old love, but to love the person you have.²⁵ In the social world within which the song was performed,

24. Tang Guizhang 1999, 114; Zhang Caoren, 31.

25. Note that the use of *ai* 愛 for "love" is not common in song, perhaps because it implies not wanting to let go of the beloved. Thus when a powerful courtier wanted to take away Green Pearl 綠珠, the famous third-century figure Shi Chong 石崇 declared that he

"things too remote" were more likely the cares of public life.²⁶ For one of our two kinds of lyrics, we are told to forget and take pleasure in the moment, but the negative in that persuasion points back to the world outside the moment, whether it is lost loves or public schedules—"things too far."

We have talked about the opposition between public values and the claim of absorption in love—always love lost or love shadowed by loss. Yan Shu's lyric is interesting in that it conjoins the antithetical terms as "things too far." Instead we are offered a way out of both duty and repetition: living in the moment.

The *manci* of Liu Yong and his successors twist and turn in mood. Yan Shu's son, Yan Jidao, managed to do this in the short scope of *xiaoling*. Yan Shu's gift was a fluency that carried the reader headlong into the seduction of the moment. The singer's role at the party was to urge guests to drink, and Yan Shu often wrote for the singer's task, as in the following lyric.²⁷

Yan Shu, to "Mulan hua" 木蘭花

燕鴻過後鶯歸去。細算浮生千萬緒。
長於春夢幾多時，散似秋雲無覓處。
聞琴解佩神仙侶。挽斷羅衣留不住。
勸君莫作獨醒人，爛醉花間應有數。

Swallows and swans have gone past,
the orioles go their way,
in this life adrift count carefully up
the millions of moments that touch you.
Longer than a springtime dream,
but how much longer?—
scattering like autumn clouds
nowhere to be found.

"loved" (*ai*) Green Pearl—he loved her and did want to let her go. While not always the case, the word for "love" (*lian* 憐) here is to love for the moment.

26. This lyric may be part of a set trying to detain an official returning to the capital. See the other lyric to "Huan xi sha" by Yan Shu earlier in this chapter. In that case, "things too far" refers to anxieties about public schedules.

27. Tang Guizhang 1999, 121; Zhang Caoren, 77.

Hearing the zither, untying her pendants,
 my goddess companion.
 Tug as you may at the gossamer robes,
 you cannot make her stay.
 I urge you not to be
 the sole man sober—
 you'll have only a certain number of times
 to be utterly drunk among the flowers.

Allusions are present but virtually invisible. The third line reworks a Bai Juyi couplet. Zhuo Wenjun was seduced by the poet Sima Xiangru playing the zither; Han River nymphs took off their pendants for Zheng Jiaofu, then disappeared when he turned his head. Qu Yuan, in a world where all were drunk, was the "sole man sober." These were so familiar that they required no annotation in Chinese until modern times.

Probably Yan Shu's most famous lyric was this version of "Huan xi sha," which was later made a touchstone of the style of song lyric and its difference from classical poetry.²⁸

Yan Shu, to "Huan xi sha"

一曲新詞酒一杯。去年天氣舊亭臺。夕陽西下幾時回。
 無可奈何花落去，似曾相識燕歸來。小園香徑獨徘徊。

A song with new lyrics,
 a cup of ale,
 Last year's weather,
 the same old terrace pavilion.
 After the evening sun goes down in the west,
 when will it return?
 Nothing can be done about
 flowers falling away,
 as if we had known each other before,
 the swallows are coming back.
 On the fragrant path of my small garden,
 I linger all alone.

28. Tang Guizhang 1999, 112; Zhang Caoren, 21.

The lines that aroused the interest of critics were the first two of the second stanza. The famous Qing critic Wang Shishen 王士禎 (1634–1711) used it as the perfect example of lines that could not be used in classical poetry.²⁹ Zhang Zongsu 張宗橐 (1705–75) pointed out that Yan Shu did indeed use the couplet (and one other line from the lyric, differing by a single character) in one his few surviving classical poems; and while it was perfect in song lyric, the same lines in classical poetry seemed to the late imperial critic “flaccid” (*ruanruo* 軟弱).³⁰

One of the most striking things in Yan Shu’s lyrics is the textualization of song. Whereas Liu Yong writes out a lyric on meeting an old love, in Yan Shu textual composition explicitly takes on the function of classical poetry, expressing feeling (詩緣情). The feeling, however, is love and love-longing, which had become virtually excluded from classical poetry in the Song. In the following lyric we are in the aftermath of a party, a situation which, in the world of song lyric, stirs immense feeling:³¹

from Yan Shu, to “Po zhenzi”

多少襟懷言不盡，寫向蠻箋曲調中。此情千萬重。

So much feeling, it can’t all be spoken,
copied out in the song melody on fine notepaper.³²
Such feeling in thousands of layers.

The textual investment of feeling is also a message to the beloved, a message usually hard to send—especially by poetic messengers such as swans and wild geese or fish.³³

29. Zhang Caoren, 23.

30. Zhang Caoren, 23.

31. Tang Guizhang 1999, 111; Zhang Caoren, 15.

32. “Fine notepaper” is *manjian* 蠻箋, literally “notepaper from non-Han of the South.” Although the designation *man* is inappropriate, we are told it was from Korea. It was also produced in Chengdu, far closer to regions that were inhabited by *man*. By this time it simply refers to a refined paper in a long oblong shape on which poems and lyrics were written. Note that it is distinct from the letter, as in the last two lines of a “Que ta zhi”: “I want to send the brightly colored notepaper along with a letter. / The mountains stretch on, the waters are vast, I don’t know where he/she is” (欲寄彩箋兼尺素。山長水闊知何處).

33. Tang Guizhang 1999, 117; Zhang Caoren, 51.

Yan Shu, to "Qingping yue" 清平樂

紅箋小字。說盡平生意。鴻雁在雲魚在水。惆悵此情難寄。
斜陽獨倚西樓。遙山恰對簾鉤。人面不知何處，綠波依舊東流。

Tiny characters on red notepaper.
They tell all I have to say for a lifetime.
Swans and geese are in the clouds,
fish are in the water.
It depresses me how these feelings are hard to send.
In setting sunlight I lean alone upstairs in the west mansion.
Faraway mountains directly face the curtain hooks.
I don't know where her/his face is,
the green waves flow east as they used to.

Feng Yansi surely wrote down his lyrics, but there is no internal reference, then or earlier, to suggest that they entered textual circulation except in the ephemeral moment of performance.

In the last analysis, Yan Shu's lyrics have the power of song, even when we only read the words. Sentiments and motifs that in later writers are banal and flat are persuasive in Yan Shu. Even with similar material one does not find his son Yan Jidao's irony and intensity. Yan Jidao begins one song lyric by failing to recall the exact moment of parting, and closes "Yulou chun" 玉樓春 with the following lines:³⁴

from Yan Jidao, to "Yulou chun" 玉樓春

憶曾挑盡五更燈，不記臨分多少話。

I remember that we kept trimming the lamp
to the last hour of night,
But I don't recall all the things we said
at the moment of parting.

Perhaps he is recalling the opening of one of his father's lyrics to "Hongchuang ting" 紅窗聽, of which the following lyric is the first stanza:³⁵

34. Tang Guizhang 1999, 306; Zhang Caoren, 416.

35. Tang Guizhang 1999, 117; Zhang Caoren, 54.

記得香閣臨別語。彼此有、萬重心訴。淡雲輕靄知多少，
隔桃源無處。

In her scented chamber I recall
what was said on the point of parting.
She and I each had
thousands of levels of the heart to declare.
Pale clouds and light haze—
I wonder how much there is,
once outside of Peach Blossom Spring,
they are nowhere to be found.

"Peach Blossom Spring" here is the grotto of the two goddesses visited by Liu Chen and Ruan Zhao; as in Tao Qian's more familiar "Peach Blossom Spring," once Liu and Ruan left, it was never to be found again. But unlike the more humanly complex lyrics of Yan Jidao, Yan Shu does remember. Even though we cannot entirely trust the chronological sequence in this case, Feng Yansi's *Yangchun ji*, to "Ying Tian chang" 應天長, provides the question in the normative background text (I translate with a female speaker, but the speaker could just as easily be male):³⁶

蘭房一宿還歸去。底死謾生留不住。
枕前語，記得否。說盡從來兩心素。
同心牢記取。切莫等閒相許。後會不知何處。雙栖人莫妒。

He spent the night in the eupatorium chamber,
then went his way.
I did whatever I could,
but couldn't keep him.
What we said on the pillow,
does he recall or not?
We told of all the feelings
of both our hearts forever.
I firmly recall our true-love knot.
Do not vow yourself casually to another.
I don't know when we will meet again.
Let others not be jealous if we roost together.

36. Huang Jinde, 88.

The more one reads *xiaoling*, the more one sees a web of motifs, here with a question posed and answered in two different ways: Feng Yansi asks, "Does he remember what we said?" Yan Shu says, "Yes, I remember." Yan Jidao says, "I remember the scene, but I don't recall what we said."

The moment of song is as ephemeral as the pleasures it celebrates, intensified always by the knowledge that it is ephemeral. The perfect words are the recollection of the moment, and not the moment itself.

Yan Shu, to "Cai sangzi"³⁷

陽和二月芳菲遍，暖景溶溶。戲蝶遊蜂。深入千花粉豔中。
何人解繫天邊日，占取春風。免使繁紅。一片西飛一片東。

Balmy brightness of April,
sweet scent everywhere,
flooded with warm light.
Playful butterflies, roaming bees
enter deep into the powdery charms
of a thousand flowers.

Who is there who knows how to moor
the sun on the horizon
and be master of the spring breeze?
He would avoid letting the dense reds
fly west petal by petal,
and petal by petal fly east.

The old figure of impossibility, "making spring stay," is revisited and undone, as the lyricist accomplishes poetically what he wants to prevent in the world. We see the slow dissolution of the dense flowers coming apart petal by petal.

37. Tang Guizhang 1999, 118; Zhang Caoren, 56.

FIVE

The Xiaoling Collections (II)

Ouyang Xiu and His Collections

Ouyang Xiu's general prominence as a literary and political figure virtually guaranteed continuing interest in his song lyrics after his death in 1072, but, as was then customary, they were not included in the initial collected works put together soon after his death. Lyrics circulated primarily individually and in groups; we don't know when they were first put together into a collection, but Ouyang Xiu's was one of those names that invited attribution, and his song lyric collections clearly acquired an unknown number of lyrics that he didn't write.

Ouyang Xiu presents us with the most serious conflict between an order of authors and an order of books. The problem, stated simply, is this: we have the good fortune, unique among Northern Song lyricists, to have versions of two extant Southern Song editions of Ouyang Xiu's lyrics, the *Jinti yuefu* 近體樂府 with 192 lyrics and the *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* 醉翁琴趣外篇 with 203 lyrics.¹ Each edition has a substantial

1. These are available as "traced copies," first *yingxie* 影寫, then *yingkan* 景刊, published between 1917 and 1924. Egan 1984, 163ff., has an extensive discussion of the relation between these two editions and the problems they present. I will cover some of the same territory with somewhat different assumptions: 1) While Tang Guizhang is, in a few cases, clearly correct in excluding certain lyrics from the Ouyang Xiu text in Tang Guizhang 1965, in most cases his decisions are open to question. 2) The issue of the scandalous lyrics gives disproportionate attention to the lyrics included in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*, but not included in *Jinti yuefu*. It ignores the corresponding number of lyrics (less the difference in aggregate numbers) included in *Jinti yuefu*, but not included in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*. 3) The unusually large number of multiple attributions in both collections warrants revisiting.

body of lyrics not included in the other. Only eighty-six lyrics that are not attributed to others are shared by the two collections. Let me suggest that when an author's works appear in such different versions with so many multiple attributions, it is not unlikely that lyrics composed by others constitute an unknown portion of even the lyrics shared between the two collections, even if those lyrics are not attributed to others in our limited extant record.

It is not impossible to find the author in these collections if we confine ourselves to those few texts that, by internal or external reference, are incontestably by Ouyang Xiu. The problem with such an approach is that it gives us a very limited picture of the author, who probably primarily wrote types of song lyrics without such clear authorial "signatures." One way to extend the credible corpus—though no longer "incontestable"—is to note certain recurring moves that are not part of the standard repertoire of *xiaoling* composition outside these collections.

That is about as far as we can go in finding the author. He certainly composed more of the songs in these two collections than we can independently judge as his own; perhaps he composed all or almost all of them. If we take a more careful look at the two collections, which were each constructing a different Ouyang Xiu out of available materials, we find that the very close matching of their shared texts suggests at least one common textual source. However, the omission in one source of some of his most famous lyrics—those we can confidently identify as being by Ouyang Xiu—only leaves us in perplexity.

To these sources must be added the eighty-three lyrics by Ouyang Xiu in the anthology *Yuefu yaci* of 1146, earlier than either of the two printed editions, but surviving only in Ming and Qing manuscript copies. The Ouyang Xiu selection is the first under named authors in *Yuefu yaci* and is, by far, the largest selection in that anthology. It also represents someone drawing on the collection as it existed in the mid-twelfth century, well before the current extant collections were made.

Scholars working on Ouyang Xiu's song lyrics always take the *Jinti yuefu* as their primary text, leaving for debate the additional lyrics in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*. In every way *Jinti yuefu* fulfilled the bibliographical image of an "authoritative" collection. The editor Luo Bi was working in the last part of the twelfth century. This edition appeared in Zhou

Bida's 周必大 edition of Ouyang Xiu's collected works, printed in 1196. We do not know if Luo Bi prepared his edition independently or as part of Zhou Bida's project, but the extant version has been perfectly integrated into the collected works. Although these were not the earliest examples of a canonical author's song lyrics being included in his collected works, their presence in Ouyang Xiu's collected works is a measure of the growing legitimacy of the genre over the course of the twelfth century.

Luo Bi's edition is provided with a colophon in which he refers to an earlier version of the collection, called *Pingshan ji* 平山集, which Luo Bi says circulated widely.² Apparently working from the *Pingshan ji*, Luo Bi "edited and corrected" (*zhengjiao* 正校) Ouyang Xiu's lyrics, complaining about two problems. First, there were lyrics attributed to other authors. Luo Bi did not remove these, since in his editorial comments he notes where lyrics appear in other lyric collections—though far fewer than the duplications we now know of. The second problem was one that had often been mentioned in earlier critical comments: the source collection contained a number of "amorous" lyrics, and Ouyang Xiu, being a revered "Confucian," could not possibly have composed them. The standard explanation was that others had written them and circulated them under Ouyang Xiu's name in order to defame him. Luo Bi took such suspect lyrics out of the collection.

Luo Bi's edition appeared under the classicizing title *New-style Yuefu* (*Jinti yuefu* 近體樂府), echoing the established and prestigious

2. Wang Zhaopeng 2004 (169) claims that *Pingshan ji* was circulating in print already in the Northern Song, but there is no evidence for this or even that *Pingshan ji* was circulating in print rather than in manuscript at the beginning of the Southern Song. Luo Bi's own edition contains two notes. The first is anonymous and dates from about 1106. It is an anecdote about Wang Anshi's recalling three lines from an Ouyang Xiu lyric but having forgotten the rest. Two decades after Wang Anshi's death, the writer claims to have "gotten" (得) it on his travels. It is not at all clear that he "got" anything more than the rest of the one lyric from which Wang Anshi had quoted or the sequence to which it belonged. The other "colophon" by one Zhu Songqiao 朱松喬 begins with a party in 1116, referring to the same anecdote about Wang Anshi. In 1128 Zhu "got this volume" (得此本), so this does indeed sound like a colophon to a version. However, the missing lyric was one of a series on the twelve months, which seems to have circulated independently, and this was probably what Zhu Songqiao "got." The series is printed (along with another series on the twelve months) at the end of the second fascicle of *Jinti yuefu*, placed after Luo Bi's notes on all the other lyrics in that fascicle.

term "new-style classical poetry" in the Tang. Presumably the new title was to mark the difference of this edition from *Pingshan ji* and to assign it a generic locus in the complete collection of Ouyang Xiu's works.

It is worth considering the *Jinti yuefu* as a material artifact with cultural significance. It is, on the first page of the first fascicle, also the one hundred and thirty-first fascicle of the *Ouyang Wenzhong ji* 歐陽文忠集, with Ouyang Xiu referred to by his posthumous name granted by the emperor. The full compilation is not called the *quanji* 全集 (complete works), the term sometimes used in the Southern Song when additional works by an author are included with the standard "literary collection." It is named as part of the "literary collection" itself. In the Northern Song, song lyric had generally not been considered a serious form and was deemed unworthy of inclusion in a "literary collection." Ouyang Xiu was revered as a great "Confucian," one of the most distinguished writers and political figures of the dynasty. During his lifetime there had been gossip about his morals, and charges had been brought against him for having sexual relations with his unmarried step-niece. Many of the lyrics circulating under his name contributed to that gossip. How could such a group of lyrics be included in his "literary collection," a monument to the great man?

Already in the mid-twelfth century the theory of "malicious attribution" had been much discussed and seems to have been generally accepted (keep in mind that the Southern Song had become exceedingly moralistic, with standards of "moral" judgment far more strict than is evidenced in the mid-eleventh century).³ The first task of an editor was to remove all the morally suspect lyrics; this Luo Bi did.

The *Jinti yuefu*, however, does *not* begin with song lyrics (*ci* or *changduanju* 長短句, as they were often called), but rather with "performer presentations" (*yueyu* 樂語), in which the singer would read out a piece of parallel prose composed by the author before performing a text. The first five "performer presentations," each followed by a quatrain in the seven-syllable line, were to celebrate the emperor's birthday. Then we have a "performer presentation," here called *zhiyu* 致語 (roughly synonymous

3. We should also keep in mind that the dynasty was still using taxpayer money to provide its officials, civil and military, with "singers" for their "entertainment" when on assignment.

to *yueyu*) for a party, this time followed by a regulated classical poem in the seven-syllable line. From this we go into the song lyrics (*changduan ju*) proper, beginning with a sequence (*lianzhang* 連章) of ten lyrics to the tune "Cai sangzi" 採桑子 on West Lake in Yingzhou. This is prefaced with yet another "performer presentation," here given as the synonymous *nianyu* 念語. Thus the *Jinti yuefu* begins by formally linking poems for the emperor's birthday with some of Ouyang Xiu's finest and most decorous song lyrics.

Before considering the sequence on West Lake, we might note one other formal strategy to legitimate the genre. At the end of each of the three fascicles, Luo Bi provides editorial notes, citing variants and other collections with the same lyric, treating the works with scholarly seriousness.

The ten lyrics on West Lake support—as few other Ouyang Xiu lyrics do—an aura of legitimacy for the genre. Each first line ends with the phrase *Xihu hao* 西湖好 ("West Lake is best"). The twelfth-century connoisseur of song lyrics would have heard the famous lyric to "Pusa man," beginning with "Everyone says the Southland is best" (*renren jinshuo Jiangnan hao* 人人盡說江南好)—or a variation on that theme. It could be found variously attributed to Li Bai (*Zunqian ji*), Wei Zhuang (*Huajian ji*), or Feng Yansi (*Yangchun ji*).⁴ The strongest association, however, would probably have been the sequence of ten lyrics by Pan Lang to the tune "Jiuquanzi" 酒泉子, celebrating West Lake in Hangzhou. The appended note by Pan Lang is a defense of song lyric. These lyrics were so esteemed that they were carved in stone in Sichuan, and in 1106, in the late Northern Song, they were carved in stone by West Lake in Hangzhou, the place Pan Lang celebrated in his lyrics. Hangzhou was, of course, to become the Southern Song capital and would have been one of the local cultural monuments for a twelfth-century intellectual. Even though Ouyang Xiu's lyrics were celebrating a different "West Lake," the association with Pan Lang's sequence would have been unmistakable.

It is hard not to see *Jinti yuefu* as designed to give Ouyang Xiu's lyrics a comfortable home in Ouyang Xiu's complete works. Whatever he might have heard, none but the most puritanical of Southern Song

4. Zeng Zhaomin, 153.

moralists could find anything of offense in these lyrics. Someone staying in Hangzhou would surely have known the following lyric:⁵

Pan Lang, to "Jiuquanzi" IV

長憶西湖，盡日憑樓闌上望。
三三兩兩釣魚舟。島嶼正清秋。
笛聲依約蘆花裏。白鳥成行忽驚起。
別來閒整釣魚竿。思入水雲寒。

Always I recall West Lake
where all day long I would lean on railings of towers and gaze.
Fishing boats in two's and three's.
Its islands right in clear autumn.
The sound of a flute, indistinct, among the flowers of the reeds;
white birds forming lines as they startle up suddenly.
Since I left I've been idly readying my fishing pole;
longing to enter into the chill of water and clouds.

That same person—not even knowing that Ouyang Xiu was referring to another "West Lake"—would have recognized those birds again in the first lyric in Ouyang Xiu's series:⁶

Ouyang Xiu, to "Cai sangzi"

輕舟短棹西湖好，綠水逶迤。芳草長堤。隱隱笙歌處處隨。
無風水面琉璃滑，不覺船移。微動漣漪。驚起沙禽掠岸飛。

A light skiff and short oars,
West Lake is best,
with green waters winding off afar.
A long embankment with fragrant plants.
The muted sounds of reed-organs and songs follow you everywhere.
The windless surface of the water, as slick as glass,
and one has no sense that the boat is moving.
Barely stirring tiny ripples,
startling into flight sand birds that fly off hugging the shore.

5. Tang Guizhang 1999, 7.

6. Tang Guizhang 1999, 154; Qiu Shaohua 1.

Although the first lyric is a scene of memory, and the second is an implicit scene of presence (perhaps transformed into memory by the last lyric in the sequence), both are scenes of fantasy, which was the strength of song lyric. The moralist critic might note a basic difference in the fantasies: Pan Lang's is a scene of reclusion, a place he dreams of entering, of being another fisherman among the fishermen, as he notes in the beginning. As Ouyang Xiu sails along the shore, however, he hears the muted sound of parties everywhere. Those parties are bound to the world of the lyrics in much of the rest of his collection. The editor has done what he could to open with an image of serene purity; in this opening lyric the songs of those young women singers are still off in the distance, but soon the reader will unwittingly draw closer to the shore and disembark.

As we read on in Ouyang Xiu's sequence we gradually leave Pan Lang's decorous world of the recluse and enter the world of mid-eleventh century song lyric. The party is no longer a muted sound on the shore, but is taking place on the boat itself. The birds that had been startled by light ripples would have long fled such noise. The third lyric is particularly interesting:⁷

畫船載酒西湖好，急管繁弦。玉盞催傳。穩泛平波任醉眠。
行雲卻在行舟下，空水澄鮮。俯仰留連。疑是湖中別有天。

With a painted boat carrying ale
West Lake is best,
shrill piping, a flurry of strings.
Jade cups pressed on one as they are passed around.
Sailing steadily on calm waters,
one can sleep drunkenly as one pleases.
The moving clouds are, in fact, *below* the moving boat,
sky and water are fresh and pure.
I keep looking up and down.
It seems there is another heaven in the lake.

In only three lyrics we have moved from the decorous opening to drunkenness and loud music. It is the second stanza that draws our attention.

7. Tang Guizhang 1999, 154; Qiu Shaohua, 5.

Everyone would recognize the gesture to Li Bai's famous line: "There is another world [heaven/sky and earth] that is not this mortal world" (別有天地非人間). But this is not what Ouyang Xiu's song is saying. He is speaking of a world of reflection. Readers of song lyric should always be sensitive to such an evocation of alterity, the idea that "there is another" (*bieyou* 別有) world. It is a second, mirroring world. Its "difference," also *bie*, matters for song lyric.

At the initial performance of the sequence everyone knew that for Ouyang Xiu this was a return to Yingzhou and its "West Lake." The later "reader" would not know this until the last lyric of the sequence.⁸

平生為愛西湖好，來擁朱輪。富貴浮雲。俯仰流年二十春。
歸來恰似遼東鶴，城郭人民。觸目皆新。誰識當年舊主人。

I've always loved it,

West Lake is best,

coming in a crowd of coaches with crimson wheels.

Wealth and high station are floating clouds—

in an instant twenty springtimes have drifted past.

Coming back now, I am just like that crane of Liaodong:⁹

those who live in the city

are all new to my eyes.

Who of them recognizes the former master of days gone by?

The reference to parties by the lake here seems to be qualified as a memory from twenty years before, raising the possibility that the sequence describes a past scene (though the "performer presentation" makes it clear that the sequence is performed at a party). Like the mirroring surface of the lake in the third lyric, it is a gesture of distancing and transforming what seemed immediate into an illusion of cloud-shapes. It is all right for a distinguished and hard-working servant of the empire to declare that "wealth and high station are floating clouds" on returning to retire in a place where he was once governor.

8. Tang Guizhang 1999, 155; Qiu Shaohua 14.

9. This is a reference to Ding Lingwei, who, after studying the arts of immortality and being transformed into a crane, returned to his home to find that all the people he had known were gone.

The West Lake sequence is not included in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*, whose title announces a different audience from that of *Jinti yuefu*.¹⁰ Rather than referring to Ouyang Xiu by his posthumous honorific name, here the poet refers to him by his pseudonym *Zuiweng* 醉翁 ("Drunken Old Man"). Rather than "new-style *yuefu*," these are "zither delights" (*qinqu* 琴趣), the same term used for other editions in this series. And instead of making song lyrics a part of the author's classical works, the collection is called "external works" (*waipian* 外篇), an explicit gesture to exclusion from the more serious classical works. This title clearly had its own audience.

Among the eighty-six lyrics shared by both editions and having no alternative attributions of authorship is the below lyric, also to "Cai sangzi," which is in some ways similar to the final lyric of the West Lake sequence. Because it immediately follows the sequence in *Jinti yuefu*, it is easy for us to read it as part of the sequence."

Ouyang Xiu, to "Cai sangzi"

十年前是尊前客，月白風清。憂患凋零。老去光陰速可驚。
鬢華雖改心無改，試把金觥。舊曲重聽。猶似當年醉裏聲。

Ten years ago, I was a guest at drinking parties,
in white moonlight and cool breeze.
Then I fell into trouble and sorrow,
grew old and was shocked by time's swift passage.

These white-flecked locks have changed,
but my heart hasn't changed at all,
as I reach to take the flagon in hand.
And when I hear the old songs again,
it's just like hearing them when drunk back then.

Why was this one included in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* while the others were not? It is, of course, a question we cannot answer with any certainty, but there are points of difference we might notice. Song lyrics of Ouyang Xiu's generation may be specific about the season, but they

10. For the term *qinqu waipian* 琴趣外篇 see Shi Zhecun, 17–20.

11. Tang Guizhang 1999, 156.

tend not to be specific about the place. If one wanted to perform a lyric anywhere other than "West Lake," it would probably have been out of place. Furthermore, in the final West Lake lyric Ouyang Xiu speaks of himself as the "former master," referring to the time he was governor of Yingzhou. Ouyang Xiu has, in effect, "signed" the lyric and dated it internally: this lyric was by a former governor of about twenty years earlier. By contrast, the version of "Cai sangzi" included in both collections could be performed by anyone, anywhere. We might feel the incongruity of a fourteen-year-old singer referring to "white-flecked locks," but that easily went with the assumption that the lyricist was an older man.

It is interesting to think of this song in the context of the latter part of the eleventh century, when song lyric was becoming "literary" in the fullest sense, often highly specific with subtitles and prefaces marking the occasion. Ouyang Xiu's lyrics were distinctly old fashioned, which was their attraction, like hearing "the old songs" mentioned in the second stanza.

The lyric thematizes the power of song to create the illusion of timelessness. Song, in this sense, does not celebrate the particular occasion itself but rather the particular occasion as recurrent and normative: it becomes a fantasy. Ouyang Xiu claims that in listening to the songs he has the illusion that things are the same, and that nothing has changed. Yet he is aware of the illusoriness of the illusion. What if the words of the song are *these* words, telling him that the illusion is only an illusion? There are songs that simply create a scene of fantasy, but there are also many songs that concern or encourage the passage *into* a world of fantasy, thus underscoring the difference between the ordinary world and the world of song. The time of song and the party is a privileged space and span—brief in the measure of time outside, but timeless within itself. Many song lyrics locate themselves on the margins of party time, singing the movements into and out of that special world.

The issue of specificity may help explain why *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* omitted what was perhaps Ouyang Xiu's most famous lyric, a lyric on Pingshan Hall near Yangzhou, the same Pingshan (Ping Mountain)

that had lent its name to the earlier version of Ouyang Xiu's collected lyrics, *Pingshan ji*.¹²

Ouyang Xiu, to "Chaozhong cuo" 朝中措

平山閣檻倚晴空。山色有無中。手種堂前垂柳，別來幾度春風。
文章太守，揮毫萬字，一飲千鍾。行樂直須年少，尊前看取衰翁。

The porch railing of Ping Mountain Hall rests against a clear sky,
the mountain's color, between being there and not,
With my own hands I planted the willows before that hall,
since I left how many times
have they been through spring's breeze?

Now a literary Lord Governor,
ten thousand words come as he flourishes his brush,
a thousand cups downed at one sitting.
To make merry one should be young—
look at this frail old man in his cups.

This lyric is not only highly specific, but it is one of the few lyrics by Ouyang Xiu that is provided with an occasional subtitle: "Sending off Liu Chang [Yuanfu] to be governor of Yangzhou" 送劉仲原甫出守維揚. It is through the very specificity of place that Su Shi remembered this song and quoted it in his "Shuidiao getou" 水調歌頭, which contains the passage:¹³

長記平山堂上，敲枕江南煙雨，渺渺沒孤鴻。
認得醉翁語，山色有無中。

I always recall in Ping Mountain Hall
lying on my pillow facing Jiangnan's misty rain.
Far in the distance a lone swan disappeared,
and in this I recognize the words of the Drunken Old Man:
"the mountain's color, between being there and not."

12. Tang Guizhang 1999, 156; Qiu Shaohua, 20. Other collections printed in the *qinqu waipian* series have an ample representation of highly specific lyrics with occasional subtitles. Whatever the reason, this iteration of "Ouyang Xiu's song lyrics" is distinct.

13. Tang Guizhang 1999, 360; Zou and Wang, 483.

Some critics argue over the possibility that Su Shi is, in this passage, redeeming Ouyang Xiu's "error," since the line quoted must describe a scene of mist, rather than the clear sky described in the first line of Ouyang Xiu's song. However, we note that Su Shi is describing what he claims to have seen "being there"; Ouyang Xiu was writing explicitly from elsewhere (Ping Mountain Hall was near Yangzhou, where Liu Chang was going to take up the post of governor) and giving general descriptions, with no claim to presenting a coherent scene.

As we might expect, the lyric on Ping Mountain Hall appeared toward the beginning of *Jinti yuefu*, directly after the "Cai sangzi" lyrics, following both the sequence and three miscellaneous "Cai sangzi," including the one quoted above. If classical poetry was increasingly arranged by the chronology of composition, song lyric collections were often organized by tune titles. It is important here to stress that while lyrics to the same tune title were included together, the order of lyrics under a title and the sequence of tune titles were not. The sequence of tune titles and the order of lyrics within a given title are different in the two collections of Ouyang Xiu's lyrics, as well as in the substantial selection of Ouyang Xiu's lyrics in *Yuefu yaci* (1146). What this means is that the organization of Ouyang Xiu's lyrics was probably Luo Bi's own.

Immediately after the Ping Mountain Hall lyric, we see in *Jinti yuefu* three lyrics to "Gui zi yao" 歸自遙, on the topic of a woman yearning for an absent man. These are mild enough, but as Luo Bi notes at the end of the fascicle, these belong to the *Yangchun ji*, to Feng Yansi. It is interesting that these three lyrics are not in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*—though two were selected for the *Yuefu yaci* and must have been included in the *Pingshan ji*. If we consider the opening sequence of texts in *Jinti yuefu*, we have decorous lyrics befitting Ouyang Xiu's dignity, with the first "boudoir laments," the old standard of song lyric, turning out to be an example of those lyrics by other writers that have slipped into Ouyang Xiu's collected lyrics.

Even though not all the lyrics in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* may have been available to Luo Bi in the compilation of *Jinti yuefu*, when we have a group of lyrics composed to the same tune title, we can more clearly see what Luo Bi might have chosen to admit into the collection. A few pages

later in the first fascicle of *Jinti yuefu*, there are two lyrics to the popular tune "Ta suo xing," including this one:¹⁴

候館梅殘，溪橋柳細。草薰風暖搖征轡。
離愁漸遠漸無窮，迢迢不斷如春水。
寸寸柔腸，盈盈粉淚。樓高莫近危闌倚。
平蕪盡處是春山，行人更在春山外。

Plum blossoms tattered at the guest lodge,
willows delicate by the bridge over the creek.
Plants fragrant, the breeze balmy,
I shake the reins on my journey.
As I gradually go farther, parting's sorrow
gradually grows endless,
on into the distance without breaking off,
like springtime waters.

Every inch of her tender guts,
bright and clear, tears through powder.
The building is high; draw not near
the sheer railing to lean.
Where the flat stretch of weeds ends,
there are spring mountains,
and the traveler is farther on
beyond the spring mountains.

This is the standard theme of the woman longing for the distant man. The only objection one could raise on moral grounds is an objection of last resort: that Ouyang Xiu should have been spending his time in more serious pursuits.

Zuiweng qinqu waipian contains this lyric, along with several others that are not included in *Jinti yuefu*. There is nothing in the least lurid or erotic about them, but they often suggest a different level of intensity in the engagement with love. If the preceding lyric could (and normally would) be taken as an expression of a wife's longing for her husband, that is a scenario more difficult to imagine in the following lyric from *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*:¹⁵

14. Tang Guizhang 1999, 157; Qiu Shaohua, 27.

15. Tang Guizhang 1999, 197; Qiu Shaohua, 315.

Ouyang Xiu, to "Ta suo xing"

雲母屏低，流蘇帳小。矮床薄被秋將晚。
乍涼天氣未寒時，平明窗外聞啼鳥。
困憚榴花，香添蕙草。佳期須及朱顏好。
莫言多病為多情，此身甘向情中老。

The mica screen is low,
the curtain fringes small.
A short bed, thin covers,
about to turn dawn in autumn.
The time when the weather is first chilly,
but not yet cold,
at daybreak outside the window
I hear birds call out.
Weariness beleaguers the pomegranate blossoms,
the basil grows more fragrant.
That lovely moment to meet must come
while my cheeks are still rosy.
Don't say that much illness comes
from too much passion—
this body of mine would gladly
grow old in passion.

Here the strict moralist could find reason to be troubled. The term here translated as "passion" is *qing* 情, sometimes moderate "feelings," but also the term used for the more intense "passions." The minatory threat of illness is the consequence of the latter rather than the former. The head-long affirmation of continuous passion would have raised the eyebrows of those whose eyebrows were meant to be raised. Moreover, *jiaqi* 佳期 ("that lovely moment to meet") sounds more like an assignation than a husband's return—though it could possibly refer to the latter. While there are far more offensive lyrics in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*, for Luo Bi, who believed in a certain image of Ouyang Xiu, this would have been a lyric to leave out.

Given the way lyrics were floating about, I have no confidence that either of the two lyrics above, to "Ta suo xing," were necessarily by Ouyang Xiu. Although we can safely credit the lyric on Ping Mountain Hall to Ouyang Xiu, the best we can say about those two preceding

lyrics is that he could have written either or both, and he certainly wrote other lyrics that resembled both.

To think about song lyric in the mid-eleventh century, we have to change our perspective. We can be certain that all these famous names did indeed write song lyrics and that some of the lyrics preserved under their names were indeed composed by them. At the same time, for a song lyric circulating in a song-book or repertoire, attribution to a well-known author was an attribute that added value. Authorship was not subject to scholarly scrutiny—at least until the mid-twelfth century, when song lyric became “literature” in the proper Chinese sense, something we see very strongly in Luo Bi’s edition of *Jinti yuefu*.

It really doesn’t matter whether Feng Yansi or Ouyang Xiu wrote the following lyric to “Die lian hua” (or in Feng, to “Que ta zhi”):¹⁶

庭院深深深幾許，楊柳堆煙，簾幕無重數。
玉勒雕鞍遊冶處，樓高不見章臺路。
雨橫風狂三月暮，門掩黃昏，無計留春住。
淚眼問花花不語，亂紅飛過秋千去。

The courtyard is deep, so deep, I know not how deep,
mists piling up in the willows,
curtains beyond counting.
His jade bridle and carved saddle are off
wandering for pleasure,
from high in the building I cannot see
the Zhang Terrace Road.

The rain drives hard, the wind is wild, third month’s end,
the gate is closed in the growing dusk,
I have no way to make spring stay.
With tear-filled eyes I ask the flowers, the flowers do not speak,
a tumult of red goes flying off past the swing.

It is a lovely song and could have been written by either lyricist. We can’t always tell the tenth century from the eleventh century, much less tell Feng Yansi from Ouyang Xiu. It could have been written by someone

16. Huang Jinde, 29; Qiu Shaohua, 51. This lyric is absent from Ouyang Xiu’s corpus in QSc, see Tang Guizhang 1999, 161.

else altogether and attributed to one of those two famous names in song lyric simply because it was so memorable. In the eleventh century the author was an attribute of the song lyric; from the twelfth century on, the song lyric was an attribute of the author.

In this context we might note a cento (*jiju* 集句) by Chao Buzhi 晁補之 (1053–1110) to “Jiang shenzi” 江神子, probably dating from the first decade of the twelfth century.¹⁷ Song lyric centos had been done earlier by Su Shi and Wang Anshi, but they were done from lines of classical poetry. Chao Buzhi does use one line from Li Shangyin, but all the other appropriated lines are from song lyric, and they all have attributions to Ouyang Xiu. We have the penultimate line from the preceding lyric in a slight variation: “Ale in hand I ask the flowers, the flowers do not speak” (把酒問花花不語). This was the version Chao knew (or thought he knew); and, like Li Qingzhao, he believed the lyric was by Ouyang Xiu rather than Feng Yansi. The first line of the cento is from a version of “Yicong hua” 一叢花 attributed to both Zhang Xian and Ouyang Xiu; probably because it is included only in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*, Tang Guizhang decides the case in favor of Zhang Xian—even though our earliest extant text of Zhang Xian is from three centuries later.

While the lyric and line cited from “Yicong hua” are unremarkable, the Li Shangyin line was widely known, as was (at least later in the twelfth century) the “Die lian hua” attributed to both Ouyang Xiu and Feng Yansi. This leads us to believe that the two other lyrics by Ouyang Xiu used in the cento (one used twice) were among the Ouyang Xiu lyrics everyone knew at the beginning of the twelfth century. These lyrics remain among his best-known lyrics, which lends weight to the theory that they were well-known from the beginning. The first lyric is to Ouyang Xiu’s “Lang tao sha” 浪淘沙.¹⁸ The lines incorporated into Chao Buzhi’s cento are underlined.

把酒祝東風。且共從容。垂楊紫陌洛城東。
總是當時攜手處，游遍芳叢。

17. Liu Naichang, 42.

18. Tang Guizhang 1999, 179; Qiu Shaohua, 192.

聚散苦匆匆。此恨無窮。今年花勝去年紅。
可惜明年花更好，知與誰同。

I take ale in hand and pray to the east wind
To hang around with me a while.
The purple lanes with weeping willows
east of Luoyang's walls
Are all places we held hands back then
roaming through clumps of flowers everywhere.
Companions went their ways so hastily.
My resentment at this is boundless.
This year's flowers are even redder than last year's.
It's too bad that next year the flowers will be even better,
but I wonder whom I'll be with.¹⁹

The other is a lyric to "Ding fengbo" 定風波:²⁰

把酒花前欲問公。對花何事訴金鐘。為問去年春甚處。
虛度。鶯聲撩亂一場空。
今歲春來須愛惜。難得。須知花面不長紅。待得酒醒君不見。
千片。不隨流水即隨風。

Ale in hand before the flowers,
I would ask you, sir,
facing the flowers why
do you complain to the golden goblet?
"Let me then ask about last year—
where now is that spring?
It passed in vain.
The turmoil of its orioles' notes
was all for nothing.
This year when spring comes,
you must cherish it.
It's a rare gift.
You should know that the flower-faces
will not always be pink.

19. Or "whom she will be with."

20. Tang Guizhang 1999, 180; Qiu Shaohua, 203.

And when you sober up from drinking
 have you seen
 A thousand petals
If not going off with the current,
then going off with the wind?"

Both lyrics have the wonderful anonymity of mid-eleventh century songs, and celebrate spring. Both involve acts of address. The claim that the flowers get redder every year is a fine conceit, the impression of a subject who himself is aging. But their genius is—as with Yan Shu's lyrics—their fluency.

Chao Buzhi's lyric comes with the note that it is a cento, and a cento should have a source for every rhyme period. There are, however, two rhyme periods with no known source. It is a useful reminder that not every lyric that would have been recognizable when Chao Buzhi was writing—perhaps even recognizable as Ouyang Xiu's—survived to find a place in the compilations of the second half of the twelfth century.

Ronald Egan did a fine study of the differences between the lyrics of Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu, concluding that Ouyang Xiu tends more to narrative.²¹ To some degree this is because such lyrics attract our attention more than others (allowing that the two lyricists "share" more than a few pieces). The *xiaoling* had a minor tradition of vignette, growing out of Tang classical poetry. Ouyang Xiu seems to have been particularly attracted to this mode, particularly to the voyeuristic vignette of the Southland, as in the following song.²²

Ouyang Xiu, to "Die lian hua" 蝶戀花

越女採蓮秋水畔。窄袖輕羅，暗露雙金釧。
 照影摘花花似面。芳心只共絲爭亂。
 鷓鴣灘頭風浪晚。霧重煙輕，不見來時伴。
 隱隱歌聲歸棹遠。離愁引著江南岸。

21. Egan 1984.

22. Tang Guizhang 1999, 161; Qiu Shaohua, 55.

A girl of Yue picks lotus
 by the edge of autumn waters.
 Narrow sleeves of light gossamer
 faintly reveal a pair of golden bracelets.
 Looking at her reflection, she picks a flower,
 the flower is like her face.
 Hard to say which is more in a tangle—
 her sweet heart or the lotus threads.
 By the rapids with tufted ducks
 the day grows late on windblown waves.
 The fog heavy, the mist light,
 she doesn't see the companions who came with her.
 The muffled sound of singing,
 their homebound oars afar.
 The sorrow of separation has drawn her
 up against the river's southern shore.

The lotus-picking poem or song had a long tradition, and we might
 here compare Ouyang Xiu's lyric with a *xiaoling* in Liu Yong's *Yuezhang*
ji:²³

Liu Yong, to "He chuan"

淮岸。向晚。圓荷向背，芙蓉深淺。
 仙娥畫舸，露漬紅芳交亂。難分花與面。
 采多漸覺輕船滿。呼歸伴。急槳煙村遠。
 隱隱棹歌，漸被蒹葭遮斷。曲終人不見。

The Huai's shore,
 Towards evening,
 The round lotus leaves show their backs or fronts,
 a depth of the lotus blooms.
 Immortal maid in a painted skiff,
 dew steeps the red blooms, all mixed together.
 Hard to tell face and flower apart.
 Picking much, she gradually senses that the light boat is full.
 She calls for her companions to go back.

23. Tang Guizhang 1999, 59; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 214.

They hurry their oars toward the misty village afar.
 Muted, the rowing song,
 and gradually they are hidden behind reeds and rushes.
 The song ends, and the person is not to be seen.

We have the identity of face and flowers, the “muted” (*yinyin*) sound of song as the boats return. Elsewhere we see the boats heavy with lotus (roots). Lotus-picking songs share images and move with room for variation. Ouyang Xiu’s lotus picker is distracted by longing while the others return.

It is impossible to prove or disprove unified authorship for a very large set of lyrics, but we can see traces in the reuse of a motif that is not part of the shared stock of images and themes of *xiaoling*. The melancholy distraction of the girl of Yue causes her boat to run aground, which is not part of the shared repertoire. That sudden bump is recycled in a very different key in the following lyric:²⁴

Ouyang Xiu, to “Yujia ao” 漁家傲

花底忽聞敲兩槳。逡巡女伴來尋訪。酒盞旋將荷葉當。
 蓮舟蕩。時時盞裏生紅浪。
 花氣酒香清廝釀。花腮酒面紅相向。醉倚綠陰眠一餉。
 驚起望。船頭閣在沙灘上。

Under the flowers [she] suddenly hears
 a pair of oars creaking,
 In a moment her girl companions come looking for her.
 Next they take lotus leaves to serve as their wine-cups.
 The lotus boat sweeps along with the current,
 And from time to time red ripples appear within the cups.
 The odors of the flowers and wine mix clearly,
 The cheeks of flowers and wine-flushed faces
 stand opposite one another, red.
 Drunk in the green shade, they sleep a moment.
 They wake with a start and look:
 The boat’s prow has lodged in a sandbar.

24. Tang Guizhang 1999, 164; Qiu Shaohua, 80.

The rather ordinary "Die lian hua" is redone here with a whimsical genius. She first hears the sound, then sees the boaters.²⁵ Conventionally a woman's face may be compared to a flower (as in "Die lian hua"), but Ouyang Xiu here carries it to an extreme as the girls' faces get increasingly flushed from drinking and are reflected in the ale in the lotus leaves, while the girls doze off and let the boat carry them. A sudden jolt wakes them up; they look around to discover that the boat has run aground on a sandbar. It has many of the same elements and the same ending as the earlier "Die lian hua."

The similarity between the two lotus-picking songs above is fairly obvious. The following lyric to "Yujia ao" is on an entirely different theme, and its relation to the two preceding lyrics is not at all obvious, but the closing "surprise," combined with the motif of confusing reflection with the thing reflected, begins to seem like an "authorial" quirk.²⁶

Ouyang Xiu, to "Yujia ao"

一派潺湲流碧漲。新亭四面山相向。翠竹嶺頭明月上。
迷俯仰。月輪正在泉中漾。
更待高秋天氣爽。菊花香裏開新釀。酒美賓嘉真勝賞。
紅粉唱。山深分外歌聲響。

A course of babbling waters,
flowing sapphire floods,
A new pavilion, on all sides
the mountains facing.
Over a ridge of azure bamboo
the bright moon rises.
I can't tell what's up or down.
The moon's orb is right here
swimming in the spring.
Wait until high autumn
when the weather is brisk.
In the fragrance of chrysanthemums
we open new brew.

25. Egan 1984 (134) takes this as a man who joins the girl. Although this is possible, in lotus-picking songs (including songs like "Die lian hua" above), *nüban* 女伴 usually refers to the other girls in a group.

26. Tang Guizhang 1999, 163; Qiu Shaohua, 71.

The ale is good, the guests are fine,
 truly a splendid experience.
 Rouge sings,
 and from deep in the mountains the singer's voice
 echoes with particular resonance.

The echo of singing in the second stanza is the double of the reflection in the first stanza, forming the Chinese compound *yingxiang* 影響 ("reflection and echo"). At this point we can draw in a lyric that was certainly by Ouyang Xiu, quoted earlier on page 131, the third of "Cai sangzi":

The moving clouds are below the moving boat,
 sky and water are fresh and pure.
 I keep looking up and down.
 It seems there is another sky in the lake.

This brings us to the controversial lyrics in the *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* that are not included in *Jinti yuefu*. Although Luo Bi excluded lyrics that he believed were falsely attributed to Ouyang Xiu to defame him, there is no compelling reason to assume that the additional lyrics in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* are all necessarily the same as the ones Luo Bi excluded—except that many are more "amorous." It is worth noting that none of the eighty-three Ouyang Xiu lyrics included in Zeng Cao's *Yuefu yaci*, completed almost half a century before *Jinti yuefu*, draw from those additional lyrics—but Zeng Zao is explicit in his exclusion of morally dubious lyrics. Many are to tune titles that do not occur elsewhere in *Jinti yuefu* and have vernacular usages that do not occur in *Jinti yuefu*. Such differences might suggest that these lyrics are indeed not by Ouyang Xiu, but it is no less likely that these differences might have been among the criteria Zeng Cao and Luo Bi used in making their exclusions. We should note that the collections of Huang Tiangjian and others born in the mid-eleventh century have a leavening of vernacular lyrics that are usually also "amorous."²⁷ Risqué themes were often associated with

27. See Appendix C: "The 'High Style' and Its Opposites."

a particular register and in some cases with “appropriate” tunes. Many of these additional lyrics in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* are thematically and stylistically rather different, but does this mean that they were not by Ouyang Xiu, or does it mean that this characteristic made Luo Bi and earlier twelfth-century critics think they were not by Ouyang Xiu?

The additional lyrics also include pieces that are attributed to other lyricists, but these comprise about the same percentage as lyrics with multiple attributions that occur exclusively in *Jinti yuefu*. In short, we have an uncertainty here that probably can never be resolved. It is, rather, a reminder that lyrics were being composed in less decorous ways in a lower register, and that such lyrics were often casualties of the process of song lyric’s acceptance as a high literary genre. It is hard not to observe that just as song lyrics are always positioned after classical poetry in literary collections even in the present, modern editions of Ouyang Xiu’s lyrics always place the *Jinti yuefu* first, then add the pieces of *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* that are not found in *Jinti yuefu*. The hierarchy of the two editions could not be more clear.

To talk about the scandal of these lyrics in English we are driven to themes—sex and seduction and exposed skin. Many of these lyrics are thematically little different from the lyrics in *Jinti yuefu*. Much of the scandal of some of the lyrics is related to the register of the language. There are vernacular usages that make the commonplace sentiment embarrassingly intimate. If indeed many of these are the lyrics Luo Bi excluded, linguistic register counts among the criteria of judgment as to whether a text is worthy to be considered “literature” or not.

The additional lyrics to the more common tune titles tend to be less vernacular; and, if they were among the excluded lyrics, it was due to the situation represented. *Jinti yuefu* has numerous “Die lian hua,” but not the following one, which is subtitled *Yong zhen’er* 詠枕兒, “On a pillow.”²⁸

寶珠珊瑚山樣瘦。緩髻輕攏，一朵雲生袖。
昨夜佳人初命偶。論情旋旋移相就。
幾疊鴛衾紅浪皺。暗覺金釵，磔磔聲相扣。
一自楚臺人夢後。淒涼暮雨沾裊繡。

28. Tang Guizhang 1999, 190.

Precisely carved coral,
 gaunt to resemble a mountain.
 Loose coif, lightly bound up,
 a puff of cloud rising from her sleeve.
 Last night this beauty
 first met her fated mate.
 Talking of feelings, ever so gradually
 he moved over to her.
 The lovebird quilt is in several folds,
 crinkled in red waves.
 Unseen, one heard the golden hairpins
 clink as they knocked against it.
 And after the person had the dream of the Chu Terrace,²⁹
 there was the chill of the evening rain
 soaking the embroidered mattress.

This is a rather steamy scene of a wedding night, the pillow of the subtitle being necessary only to be clinked by the woman's hairpins as the couple makes love. We are left at the end with the chill of sexual fluids ("evening rain") after intercourse. This was perhaps not the image of Ouyang Xiu that Luo Bi wanted to leave in the new edition of Ouyang Xiu's collected works.

As Ronald Egan has pointed out, a few of the lyrics included in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* are truly scandalous (including one discussing a tryst with a young girl that is clearly illicit), a few are utterly innocent, and the majority are somewhere in between, though they overlap with the more "amorous" poems in *Jinti yuefu*.

We can indeed find Ouyang Xiu in these two collections, but we cannot find his boundaries. As was the case with Liu Yong, the established image of the writer constructs the boundaries. The Southern Song reader who believed Ouyang Xiu had a racy private side believed the "amorous" lyrics were his; the Southern Song reader who believed Ouyang Xiu was a moral exemplar could not possibly credit his composition of such lyrics (and was probably a bit uncomfortable with many of

29. Referring to the goddess of Wu Mountain meeting the King of Chu and having sex with him in a dream.

the lyrics deemed "genuine"). What these two communities of readers shared, however, was that each of their viewpoints may not have been entirely appropriate for reading lyrics from the mid-eleventh century. These readers could not accept the possibility that many of the lyrics might have been composed simply "for fun," using lyric types, and may have had no relation to the author's public convictions or private behavior. Song lyrics were not yet taken seriously; and while that assumption was falling apart in the last quarter of the eleventh century, it still was a public haven for authors like Su Shi.

Zhang Xian

Zhang Xian (990–1078) had a very long life that afforded him the opportunity for fellowship with several generations of writers, beginning when he was an older protégé of Yan Shu and concluding with the time he spent in the company of Su Shi. Zhang Xian was a transitional figure who not only composed many *manci*, but composed them in the rather flat style of occasional lyrics in the 1070s. Unlike Liu Yong, but like Su Shi, Zhang Xian notes social occasions in his *manci*. This ties them to an historical moment and complicates their reuse in performance. Both Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu were better known as political and cultural figures, and part of the interest in their song lyrics grew out of such wider prestige. Zhang Xian, however, was known only as a lyricist. Su Shi bemoaned the general disinterest in Zhang's classical poetry in favor of his lyrics, and indeed Zhang's once considerable classical poetry collection has been entirely lost.

One of the most salient features of Zhang Xian's collection is the presence of numerous occasional subtitles—to the extent that he is the only lyricist of his generation for whom a modern chronologically arranged collection (*biannian* 編年) has been published, by Wu Xionghe. This tells us less about the "development" of Zhang Xian as a lyricist than it does about basic changes taking place in the understanding of song lyric. Although Wu Xionghe manages—with great ingenuity—to date one lyric to 1029, the next lyric, which is clearly datable

by its subtitle, comes from 1039, when Zhang Xian was almost fifty. There are only fifteen datable lyrics before the death of Yan Shu in 1055, when Zhang Xian was sixty-five. The presence of an occasional subtitle, moreover, does not necessarily mean that it was placed there when the lyric was composed; it may have been added later by Zhang so that readers would know the circumstances. In short, Zhang Xian, who wrote a preface for Yan Shu's collected lyrics, is thinking of his own "collected lyrics," designed to be read rather than re-performed. They are songs for a particular historical moment.

We do not know the date when Yan Shu's lyrics were put together as a collection, though presumably it was after his death. We have a secure date of 1058 for the Feng Yansi collection. At about the same time, the number of occasional prefaces in Zhang Xian's work began to increase. It seems reasonably clear that for the first time, the idea of an individual's "collected lyrics" to be circulated for reading had appeared. Whether so titled by Zhang Xian himself or added later, Zhang Xian's collected lyrics bears his name, *Zhang Ziye ci* 張子野詞, in contrast to the more fanciful titles of earlier anthologies and collections of lyrics.

Yan Shu's party songs—the "new lyrics" (*xinci*) he mentions—may be said to have been composed for a certain occasion. But the party song was essentially for reuse. We read of Liu Yong writing out new lyrics for a singer and sending them as a message, but even if the lyrics make reference to specifics, they are essentially reusable. Zhang Xian's lyrics in his old age reference the occasion in much the same way occasions are referenced in classical poetry, and such lyrics often need the subtitle to be fully understood. An old-fashioned tune like "Geng louzi" 更漏子 may be almost entirely in the earlier *xiaoling* style, but the opening words of the lyric, "At the home of the Minister" (相君家), make it hard to reuse except in a very specific setting.³⁰ Su Shi has a lyric to "Nanxiangzi" 南鄉子 composed on the same occasion in 1074, which shows what can be done even with the old *xiaoling* patterns. In the subtitle Su Shi says that "Ziye [Zhang Xian] and I each composed a piece" (同子野各賦一首). Both the word "compose" (*fu* 賦) and the measure word "a piece" (一首) belong to classical poetry, not to song lyric. The appropriation of

30. Tang Guizhang 1999, 84; Wu and Shen, 63.

classical poetry terms into song lyric composition became increasingly common thereafter. Even though singers were still used in performance, the earlier performance mode in which the singer “stood in for” the relationship between a man and a woman often disappears, and the singer becomes the mere medium by which the lyricist addresses his colleagues.

Zhang Xian was a musical specialist, and his collection contains more different tune titles than the collections of all the other *xiaoling* masters—though this is to some degree a function of his ventures into *manci*. Nevertheless, many of Zhang Xian’s occasional lyrics sound very much like classical poems cut to the measures of a lyric tune pattern, which is not true of most of his undatable *xiaoling* lyrics. Perhaps this was because the verbal “material” of occasional poetry had not found a graceful form in lyric, or perhaps it was reflective of the difference between a lyricist writing in his seventies and eighties and one writing in his twenties and thirties.

It seems most unlikely that Zhang Xian began writing song lyrics in earnest around the age of fifty. While some of the undatable lyrics seem to be from his old age,³¹ a considerable percentage must have been written before he turned fifty. Many of these are much closer to the lyrics of Yan Shu and the other *xiaoling* writers.

We might consider one of Zhang Xian’s most famous lyrics, one of the earliest of his datable lyrics, written in 1043 when Zhang was a spry fifty-three. It might be significant that the lyric was composed on the occasion of his *not* being able to go to a party. The old *xiaoling* motif of solitary melancholy after a party is over is, in this case, related to a party that he missed. The subtitle is: “At the time I was a minor functionary in Jiahe; because I was sick in bed, I didn’t go to the district gathering” (時為嘉禾小倅，以病眠，不赴府會).³²

Zhang Xian, to “Tian xianzi” 天仙子

水調數聲持酒聽。午醉醒來愁未醒。送春春去幾時回，臨晚鏡。
傷流景。往事後期空記省。

31. For example, Wu and Shen, 93.

32. Tang Guizhang 1999, 88; Wu and Shen, 7.

沙上並禽池上暝。雲破月來花弄影。重重簾幕密遮燈，風不定。
人初靜。明日落紅應滿徑。

Ale in hand, I listened to several notes of the "River Melody."
I sobered up from noon drunkenness,
but not from my melancholy.³³
Seeing spring on its way, spring departs,
when will it come back?—
looking into a mirror late in the day,
I lament time slipping away,
what happened before and future meetings,
I reflect on them in vain.
Birds side by side upon the sands,
darkness on the pool,
clouds break open, the moon comes,
flowers make sport with their shadows.
Layer upon layer of curtains completely hide the lamp,
the wind has not settled,
the person now grows still,
tomorrow I'm sure fallen red petals will fill the path.

We might note the relation between the subtitle and the text. Without the subtitle we would naturally read the first line as Zhang's presence at a party. It is possible that the first line refers to the merriment he missed, but the drunkenness following the drinking in the first line gives us the impression that he could hear the music and, unable to go, was drinking alone. The subtitle is thus a necessary supplement to the words of the song, giving us a reason for his melancholy, his inability to celebrate "seeing spring on its way." Most of the song still takes place in the aftermath of the party, as often is the case in Feng Yansi; but Zhang's melancholy has a specific reason and is a continuing melancholy (or simply a "sadness" at not having been able to go to the party).

The subtitle of this early datable lyric has all the marks of having been added retrospectively: "At the time I was a minor functionary in Jiahe." "At the time I was" could also be translated "I presently am," but

33. Cf. Feng Yansi, to "Que ta zhi": "The song to mouth organs last night easily scattered, / waking from the ale added boundless melancholy" (昨夜笙歌容易散，酒興添得愁無限).

the designation of time and the information is not what one usually would give in the immediate circumstance. *Xiaocui* 小倅, translated as "minor functionary," is not usually how one refers to one's current office, and suggests that the note was added later. Since this lyric contains what was perhaps his most famous line, we seem to have here the author reconsidering the lyric for later readership and wanting to clarify a potential misunderstanding about the situation. No doubt some of Yan Shu's lyrics would gain more nuance if we knew the precise situation under which they were composed, but Yan Shu didn't seem to have cared—they were "just songs."

As suggested above, the party was to celebrate the end of spring, or "seeing spring on its way." The third line is as conventional as a song lyric line can be, and gains its edge only through the situation, having failed to say good-bye to spring. The mirror into which Zhang looks reveals his own fifty-year-old countenance. Again, the common tropes of song lyric are inflected by the circumstance, which is only accessible through the subtitle.

At the end of the first stanza, a couplet from Du Mu 杜牧 (803–52) is worked into the lyric. It is from a poem titled "In the Person of a Wuxing Singer, at the Beginning of Spring Sent to Military Official Xue" 代吳興妓春初寄薛軍事 and reads: "I feel sorry for myself looking into the mirror late in the day, / Who will join me to lament the years slipping away?" (自悲臨晚鏡，誰與惜流年).³⁴ We might first note that in the Tang classical poem, adopting the persona of a woman had to be marked with a *dai* 代 ("in the person of"). This was not necessary in Tang *yuefu*, and song lyric, frequently in the persona of a woman, carried on that tradition. Although the subtitle of Zhang Xian's lyric tells us that he simply missed a party with his colleagues, contemporary song lyric practice shifts the mood to one suggesting the love between a man and a woman, confirmed by the Du Mu source lines. "What happened before and future meetings"—a variable commonplace in contemporary song lyric—strongly suggests love affairs. The convivial and the erotic merge seamlessly, as they rarely do in the lyrics of Zhang's old age or in the lyrics of Su Shi.

34. QTS 28183.

The rhyme compelled Zhang Xian to change Du Mu's "years slipping away" (*liunian* 流年) to "light [time] slipping away" (*liujing* 流景), which completes the first stanza's progression from drinking in the morning, sleeping at noon, and waking late in the day; and it echoes the occasion of the party, "seeing spring on its way." The organization of contemporary *xiaoling* around the passage of day to night prepares us for the night scene in the second stanza, with its remarkable play of light.

As the second stanza moves to night, the lyric also moves from inside to outside. The reader of the late eleventh century, focused as he was on biographical detail, would conclude that the bedridden lyricist must be feeling much better, but the movement outdoors, whether leaning on a railing or entering a garden, is the propensity of a certain kind of *xiaoling*.

The garden scene gives him his most famous couplet, changing from darkness to light and from light to shadows. "Birds side by side" evoke mates, the figure for the love motif that quietly crept into this lyric; he makes them out outlined against the blackened space of the pool. Then the clouds pass to bring full moonlight, which in turn casts the shadows of flowers on the blossoming trees at the end of spring. If he feels the wind he does not say so; he "sees" the wind in the movement of the clouds and the fluttering of the shadows. Traditional critics often single out the verb *nong* 弄, translated as "make sport with." The flowers, of course, are not doing this by themselves; it is the wind that "makes sport" with them. *Nong* is a verb that in some contexts means "to flirt with," and that is very much in the background here, with flowers as a standard figure for beautiful young women. In the famous ending of Zhang's "Yicong hua ling" 一叢花令, the abandoned woman concludes (reworking a line from Li He):³⁵

沈恨細思, 不如桃杏, 猶解嫁東風。

Brooding resentfully, thinking it over in detail,
she cannot compare to peach and apricot blooms
that still knew enough to marry the east wind.

The "east wind" is the spring wind.

35. Tang Guizhang 1999, 76; Wu and Shen, III.

We have motifs of the passage of spring, the inescapable reality of human aging, and love all tied together, in preparation for the inevitable conclusion the next day. Before this conclusion, the poet returns inside, with a lovely image—still from an outside perspective—that mirrors the clouds drawing back from covering the moon: drawing the curtains that cover the lamp.

the wind has not settled,
the person now grows still,
tomorrow I'm sure fallen red petals will fill the path.

He knows that the wind has not settled because of the movement of the curtains, as he knows what the wind will do to those last spring blossoms, colorless as shadows and in moonlight, but bringing the first moment of color into the poem in anticipation, only after it is too late. The anticipated morning light brings the poem full circle, covering the course of a whole day and passing back and forth from light to darkness a number of times.

The following lyric to "Zui chui bian" 醉垂鞭 is one of the consummate examples of the party song and bears comparison to the famous "Die lian hua," attributed to both Feng Yansi and Ouyang Xiu. The "Die lian hua" is the perfection of a "straight" *xiaoling*, in a single register with no nuance of tone. "Zui chui bian" plays on different tones of voice with genius.

Zhang Xian, to "Zui chui bian" 醉垂鞭

雙蝶繡羅裙。東池宴。初相見。朱粉不深勻。閒花淡淡春。
細看諸處好。人人道。柳腰身。昨日亂山昏。來時衣上雲。

Gossamer skirt embroidered with paired butterflies.
A party at the eastern pond
was where I first met her.
Her rouge and powder, not thickly applied,
an idle flower in the first pale colors of spring.
If you look closely she's fine in every way,
and everyone says

her waist is a willow's.

Yesterday it grew dusky in tangled mountains,
when she came, the clouds on her clothes.

It is a song that begins and ends with clothing—indeed it begins with filmy gossamer, so often figured as clouds in a dancer's robes, and ends with clouds on her clothes. The butterflies on a singer's clothing are legible signs, playing on a male suitor looking for a "flower," echoing the tune title "Die lian hua," which in this case deserves to be translated: "Butterflies Love Flowers." The makeup too is legible: as songs tell us, youth needs no heavy makeup.

The second stanza begins with appraisal and general judgment of the girl by the community. Some critics see a contrast between the speaker's judgment that "she's fine in every way" and the general judgment that she has a "willowy waist"; however, we can also see it as enumerating the details—the complexion, the waist, indeed everything. The tone of appraisal, indeed of collective appraisal, has a certain distance that is far from the expression of someone who is smitten. She dissolves into an aggregate of charms.

Then suddenly in the last couplet the speaker recasts her "appearance." She is framed in a darkening scene of tangled mountains with "clouds on her clothes." In this formulation it is hard to tell if the clouds are figured on her clothes or if she is surrounded by clouds. She becomes the goddess of Wu Mountain—no longer a cute indentured singer whose charms are appraised by a community, but a figure of elusive power.

Zhang Xian at his best can match the finest works of Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu, but Zhang Xian is only occasionally at his best. In the *manci* of his old age, he is at his best when he follows Liu Yong; but when he exchanges song lyrics with Su Shi, the comparison is embarrassing. He did not—as Su Shi did—have an instinct for what the form could do.

Su Shi was immensely fond of Zhang Xian and wrote a colophon praising his classical poems, commenting with some dismay that most people praised only his song lyrics.³⁶ Li Zhiyi considered him a master of musicality, perfecting Liu Yong's shortcomings, but short on talent.

36. Kong Fanli 孔凡禮, ed., *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 2146.

Although Li Qingzhao did not stigmatize Zhang Xian as she did Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu as writing classical poetry with irregular punctuation, she was almost as devastating by including Zhang in a group she characterized in these terms: "Although they have fine phrases now and then, how can these broken bits and pieces deserve to be considered famous authors?" (雖時時有妙語，而破碎何足名家). Yuefu yaci allots him only eleven lyrics, compared to Ouyang Xiu's eighty-three. The Southern Song was not terribly interested in the mid-eleventh century lyricists—except for Ouyang Xiu. And in Ouyang Xiu's case the interest in song lyrics was due to the fact that he was Ouyang Xiu, and attributable to the controversy surrounding some of the lyrics. For Southern Song writers, the mature song lyric tradition began with the generation of Su Shi.

The Zhang Xian collection, *Zhang Ziyi ci* 張子野詞, is mentioned in Chen Zhensun's *Zhizhai shulu jieti*, and the earliest surviving copy is in Wu Ne's 吳訥 fifteenth-century *Baijia ci*. Another short edition was published in *Zhibuzuzhai congshu* 知不足齋叢書, with a 1788 colophon. This work arranges the lyrics by musical mode, which has been taken by critics to mean that this version was the original Song form of Zhang's collected lyrics. This theory is attractive, but we need to note that the Baos, the father and son who compiled the *congshu*, had to supplement the musical edition by 75 percent to get something as substantial as the standard Zhang Xian collection. This version of the collection had grown considerably in comparison to the Wu Ne edition, and it is hard to assess the credibility of works in the large supplement of Bao's edition.

Other Xiaoling Lyricists

Apart from the collections, song lyrics often circulated individually, and there is a considerable corpus of lyrics dated to the middle of the eleventh century. Sometimes these were preserved in the lyric anthologies of the Southern Song, but many were preserved in "remarks on song

lyric" (*cihua* 詞話), and in the large corpus of miscellanies (*biji* 筆記). Some of these sources can be dated to the eleventh century, but most are from the twelfth or thirteenth century. Many are associated with anecdotes of varying degrees of credibility. Often the same lyric appears under several authors.

With collections that took their initial shape in the last half of the eleventh century, we can think about mid-eleventh century song practice, even if we are dubious about the attribution of particular texts. When we see the obscure and generally unread collection of Du Anshi 杜安世, preserved in the extant Ming successor to the Southern Song *Baijia ci*, we find what we would expect from the more famous collections. About fifteen percent of his eighty-six lyrics appear elsewhere, primarily in the collections we have been discussing. The rest are thematically and stylistically of a piece with the other collections. He was from Chang'an, a backwater in the Song. He is referred to as "Director Du" (Du langzhong 杜郎中), which tells us very little except that he seems to have served in office; and he held posts in the far provinces. That is about all that is known about him. His lyrics were rarely referred to in "remarks on lyric" and miscellanies, and his collection was probably a chance survival of a collection that was enlisted when the Southern Song printers were trying to fill their quota of a "hundred lyricists."

Other, less copious survivals confirm our image of mid-eleventh century *xiaoling*. When Li Zhiyi, writing around the turn of the twelfth century, gave his overview of the history of song lyric from its beginnings through the middle of the eleventh century, he placed Zhang Xian as the successor to Liu Yong.³⁷ Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu were grouped together as eminent literati whose songs offered good models for composition. There was, however, a third culturally prominent writer whose lyrics were considered together with theirs. This was Song Qi 宋祁 (998–1061).

Li Zhiyi may have had access to a collection of Song Qi's lyrics, but we should entertain the possibility that reputations might have been based on just a few, widely known lyrics. Li Zhiyi, born in 1048, was

37. For a discussion of Li Zhiyi's colophon, see pp. 344ff.

writing as a middle-aged or old man; Li Qingzhao, born in 1084 and writing more than a generation later than Li Zhiyi, also mentions Song Qi, together with Zhang Xian, as being among the prominent literati writing song lyric.

Only six of Song Qi's lyrics have survived, three of which come with alternative attributions. The following version of "Lang tao sha jin" 浪淘沙近 was supposedly composed on his parting from Liu Chang 劉敞 (1019–68). It is preserved in the Southern Song *Nenggaizhi manlu* 能改齋漫錄 from the mid-twelfth century. This is very much still mid-eleventh century *xiaoling*, but it was clearly adapted to the homosocial occasions of the literati.³⁸

Song Qi, to "Lang tao sha jin" 浪淘沙近

少年不管。流光如箭。因循不覺韶光換。
至如今，始惜月滿、花滿、酒滿。
扁舟欲解垂楊岸。尚同歡宴。日斜歌闌將分散。
倚蘭橈，望水遠、天遠、人遠。

The young man doesn't care—
time flows on like an arrow.
Just hanging around, without knowing it,
spring's glory changes.
And by now
we begin to cherish the moon being full,
the flowers being full,
the ale-cup being full.
The small boat is about to unmoor
from a bank of weeping willows.
Still we share the merry feast.
The sun sinks down and the verses of song
will go their ways.
Leaning against the magnolia oar,
gaze at the waters afar,
the heavens afar,
the person afar.

38. Tang Guizhang 1999, 148.

There are, however, also exceptional lyrics. One must be careful here to be neither too skeptical nor too credulous. The only date we have in Li Guan's 李冠 life is 1010, when he presented a poem to an official who was being transferred. This places him very early in the revival of interest in lyric in the Song. One lyric, to "Die lian hua," is exactly what we would expect from the period, though it is also attributed to both Li Yu and Ouyang Xiu.³⁹

Li Guan, to "Die lian hua"

遙夜亭皋閑信步。才過清明，漸覺傷春暮。
數點雨聲風約住。朦朧淡月雲來去。
桃杏依稀香暗度。誰在秋千，笑裏輕輕語。
一寸相思千萬緒，人間沒個安排處。

Long night on the floodplain,
I idly let my footsteps carry me.
The Clear and Bright Festival has just passed,
and gradually I feel pain for spring's end.
The sound of several drops of rain,
constrained by the wind.
Past the hazy pale moon
clouds come and go.
From peach and apricot in a blur
the scent crosses unseen.
Who is that on the swing,
speaking softly amid laughter?
One speck of yearning in the heart,
thousands of instants of feeling,
in this mortal world there's no way
to get them under control.

Then we have two *manci* on historical themes to "Liuzhou getou" 六州歌頭. One appears under Li Guan's name in the 1249 *Tang Song zhuxian juemiao cixuan* 唐宋諸賢絕妙詞選. The second is attributed to Li Guan in *Houshan shihua* 後山詩話, parts of which may be by Chen

39. Tang Guizhang 1999, 145.

Shidao 陳師道 (1053–1102), but with an unknown number of later additions. The tune title, however, does not appear again until He Zhu 賀鑄 (1052–1125), who was probably writing around the turn of the twelfth century at the earliest. Both the tune and the style seem highly unlikely for someone writing relatively early in the eleventh century. I suspect that such retrospective attributions were not uncommon.

Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989–1052) is one of the great names in Song political, literary, and cultural history. A few of his lyrics are included in every modern anthology of Song dynasty song lyric. He has five lyrics preserved in the *Complete Song Lyrics of the Song Dynasty*. Several of these are exceptional in quality. Although the sources are from the Southern Song, Fan Zhongyan was a friend of Yan Shu's, and he is mentioned in comments on song lyric from the second half of the eleventh century. In the case of Li Guan we have a later popular *manci* title appearing at least a half a century before its next appearance; in the case of Fan Zhongyan we at least have a lyric that resonates with the other *xiaoling* masters, even if it is quite distinct from conventional practice. The longing is not necessarily love-longing, but it builds on the conventions of mid-century song lyric.

Fan Zhongyan, to "Sumuzhe" 蘇幕遮⁴⁰

碧雲天，黃葉地。秋色連波，波上寒煙翠。
山映斜陽天接水。芳草無情，更在斜陽外。
黯鄉魂，追旅思。夜夜除非，好夢留人睡。
明月樓高休獨倚。酒入愁腸，化作相思淚。

A sky of sapphire clouds,
earth of yellow leaves.
Autumn's colors stretch to the waves,
and on the waves the chill mist is azure.
The mountains catch the setting sun,
the sky meets the water.
Blossoming plants lack all feeling
and continue even further beyond the setting sun.

40. Tang Guizhang 1999, 14.

It shadows the homeward soul,
causes thoughts of travel to continue.
Every night unless
some pleasant dream keeps one asleep.
Cease leaning alone in bright moonlight
on the building's upper storey:
Ale will enter your melancholy innards
and turn into tears of longing.

SIX

Yan Jidao

Shuyuan's [Yan Jidao's] song lyrics are like the lads of the Wangs and Xies of Jinling—a dashing temperament and a splendid tone, which he achieved naturally, so that he can hardly be imitated.

叔原詞如金陵王謝子弟，秀氣勝韻，得之天然，殆不可學。¹

This was Wang Zhuo's assessment of Yan Jidao in *Biji manzhi*, one of the earliest collections of remarks devoted exclusively to song lyric. It would have been unusual to find anyone in the Song comparable to the aristocratic Wangs and Xies of the fourth and fifth century, famous for their panache. To Wang Zhuo this quality in Yan Jidao seemed a gift of nature, one that left a wonder but could not serve as a model for imitation.²

It is folly to attempt to distinguish a gift of nature from a gift of circumstances and the creative self-fashioning that follows from such circumstances. A lineage can be drawn from Liu Yong to Qin Guan and Zhou Bangyan and the Southern Song specialists in lyric, but Yan Jidao was in many ways unique. The seventh or eighth son of Yan Shu, Yan Jidao not only grew up in the household of one of the most prominent political figures of the second quarter of the eleventh century, but he grew up with song lyric, in a household with an establishment of domestic entertainers. According to his friend Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045–1105), he was immensely learned but disdained showing off such learning. He has a few offhand classical poems surviving, and lost poems of apparently more erudition to which Huang Tingjian wrote matching poems; but there is no hint that he cared about them or ever

1. Tang Guizhang 1986, 83. Wang and Yue, 34.

2. Perhaps Wang Zhuo was thinking of Chao Duanli's ten lyrics to "Zhegu tian" 鷓鴣天 as attempts to imitate Yan Jidao.

considered making a classical poetry collection. All that survives of the person is song lyric, *xiaoling* to be specific; and he rarely put his hand to the increasingly popular *manci*. As we saw earlier, he apparently did not bother to keep copies. They were done, he tells us in his preface, "just for a laugh and fun" (為一笑樂而已).

There is no indication that he ever tried to take the *jinshi* examination. Necessity forced him to take a series of posts that were probably not on the official "ladder." Huang Tiangjian, who wrote a preface for another version of the collection, gives us his portrait, emphasizing that it has been confirmed by others.

晏叔原，臨淄公之暮子也。磊隗權奇，疎於顧忌，文章翰墨自立規摹。常欲軒輊人而不受世之輕重。諸公雖愛之，而又以小謹望之，遂陸沈於下位。平生潛心六藝，玩思百家，持論甚高，未嘗以沽世。余嘗怪而問焉，曰我槃跚教宰，猶獲罪於諸公。憤而吐之，是唾人面也。乃獨嬉弄於樂府之餘，而寓以詩人句法：清壯頓挫，能動搖人心。士大夫傳之，以為有臨淄之風耳，罕能味其言也。余嘗論叔原，固人英也，其癡亦自絕人。愛叔原者皆慍而問其目。曰仕宦連蹇，而不能一傍貴人之門，是一癡也。論文自有體，不肯一作新進士語，此又一癡也。費資千百萬，家人寒餓而面有孺子之色，此又一癡也。人百負之而不恨，已信人，終不疑其欺己，此又一癡也。乃共以為然。

Yan Shuyuan [Yan Jidao] is the son of the old age of the lord of Linzi [Yan Shu]. Bold and forthright in manner, of a clever and unconventional cast of mind, his observance of social taboos tends to be lax. In literary composition he has established standards of his own; he is forever wanting to rank the achievements of others, yet does not accept the world's evaluation of himself. All men of position are fond of him, yet hold him to a standard of punctiliousness in small things, and thus he has remained mired in the lower ranks of officialdom. Throughout his life he has submerged his mind in the six classics, and pondered the works of all the schools of the learned; his opinions on such matters are exceedingly sophisticated, yet he has never once used such attainments to seek worldly advantage. Once I asked him about this—finding it an odd thing—and he said, "Even shambling along unassumingly as I do, I earn the ire of those men of position; to take offense and tell them what I think would be to spit in their faces." And so he merely disports himself in the remnants of *yuefu*; and yet he imbues in these works the versification of the poets (*shiren* 詩人): pure and vigorous, with a surging style, these

works can deeply stir the mind. Scholar-officials and court gentlemen circulate them, finding merely that they possess the manner of the lord of Linzi—few can truly discern the flavor of these phrases. I once delivered the following assessment of Shuyuan: “He is indeed a man of outstanding talents; yet his idiocy is also without compare.” Certain others who were fond of Shuyuan became angry, and demanded to know the reasoning behind this opinion of mine. I said, “While always mired in difficulty in his official career, he is unable to put in a single appearance at the gates of a prominent person—this is one idiocy. In discussing writing, he has a style all his own, yet he is not willing to compose a single one of the sort of things new *jinshi* graduates write—this is another idiocy. He incurs expenditures of several tens of millions; his family is hungry and cold, and yet his face still has the complexion of a young child—this is another idiocy. People can betray him a hundred times and he will not resent it; once he has put trust in someone he will never by any means suspect him of cheating him—this is another idiocy.” And with this, they all agreed that I was right.³

The Song historical record is vastly more extensive than that of the Tang, but at the same time still restricted to a certain segment of the literary elite. Except for his collection of song lyrics and a handful of anecdotes, mostly pertaining to song lyric, Yan Jidao is largely invisible in that record. His dates were entirely unknown until the 1990s when an enterprising scholar went to the home of the lineage and examined the genealogy kept only there.⁴ If we credit this genealogy, Yan Jidao’s dates are 1038–1110, making him a very close contemporary of Su Shi. If we likewise credit a famous anecdote in which Su Shi, through their shared friend Huang Tingjian, wanted to arrange a meeting with Yan Jidao and was rebuffed, they never met. The two remain, however, one of the most interesting cultural contrasts in the Song, one representing distinctively Song panache and the other, the panache of the Wangs and Xies of the Southern Dynasties. Yan Jidao shows all the intensity and irony that Su Shi clearly had within himself but spent his discursive life trying to avoid.

3. Transl. Ashmore 247, with modifications.

4. Tu Mushui 涂木水 went to the family county and examined the Yans’ genealogy to find out Yan Jidao’s dates. See Zhang Caoren, 243.

Yan Jidao must have known what was happening in the world of song lyric in his time, but he stayed resolutely within the scope of the *xiaoling* of his father's generation. Like *waka* of the same period in Japan, *xiaoling* was a closed poetic world with a highly limited lexicon and range of topics. Perfection was achieved in fluency and phrasing. His conservatism is nicely conveyed in Chen Zhensun's comment after the bibliographical citation of Yan's song lyrics in *Zhizhai shulu jieti*: "Among all the famous names his lyrics alone retrospectively press close on the *Huajian ji*, and in his best moments he surpasses them" (其詞在諸名勝中, 獨可追逼花間, 高處或過之).⁵ Chen Zhensun's reference to the *Huajian ji* is merely a gesture to the "old-fashioned"—Yan Jidao was looking not to the *Huajian ji* (which he may never have seen), but to Feng Yansi, his father, and Zhang Xian. If Zhang Xian had awkwardly gone over to *manci*, Yan Jidao stayed with the old style. As we might expect, however, his arch-conservatism—not old but new in its retrospective gaze—returns to his lyrics and makes them often profoundly different from the very style he sought to sustain. Huang Tingjian astutely observes that contemporaries appreciated Yan Jidao for continuing the style of his father, but that few truly understood him.

We like historical narratives of change, so it is a bit troubling that we cannot tell whether a particular lyric was written by Feng Yansi in the tenth century or by Ouyang Xiu a century later. With some of the lyrics of Yan Jidao, however, we can detect a narrative of change. He was the first "author" of song lyric in the full sense of the term, composing a preface to his own lyric collection. Unlike the collections of earlier song lyrics (*Huajian ji* [Among the flowers]; *Yangchun ji* [Bright spring]; *Zhuyu ji* [Pearls and jade]), Yan Jidao titled his collection *Filling in Missing Yuefu Lyrics* (*Yuefu buwang* 樂府補亡), echoing the tradition of filling in the lyrics of *Shijing* poems that survived only as titles.⁶

Su Shi represented a major revolution in song lyric; Yan Jidao represented a different revolution, not leaving the earlier *xiaoling* tradition entirely but twisting it to do new things in a new age. If it is fair to say that no one could ever again write the *xiaoling* of the mid-eleventh century,

5. Chen Zhensun, 618.

6. See Ashmore, 221ff.

except as imitations. But Yan Jidao opened up new possibilities of what could be done with the old material of *xiaoling*.

We might return to Huang Tingjian's comment that persons of distinction thought of Yan Jidao as continuing the style of his father (and that Huang Tingjian did not think they truly understood Yan Jidao). It is the assessment of a fine reader. Yan Shu had closed one of his most famous lyrics to "Mulan hua":⁷

勸君莫作獨醒人，爛醉花間應有數。

I urge you not to be
the sole man sober—
you'll have only a certain number of times
to be utterly drunk among the flowers.

One cannot help hearing this sentiment in the closing of a Yan Jidao lyric to "Yulou chun":⁸

此時金盞直須深，看盡落花能幾醉。

At such a time the golden cup
has to be poured full,
how many times can you be drunk
watching flowers fall all away?

And yet when we look at the poems in which the commonplace sentiment is set, we are in different worlds. First, Yan Shu's lyric:⁹

Swallows and swans have gone past,
the orioles go their way,
in this life adrift carefully count up
the millions of moments that touch you.
Longer than a springtime dream,
but how much longer?—

7. Tang Guizhang 1999, 121.

8. Tang Guizhang 1999, 305; Zhang Caoren 412.

9. See "The *Zhuyu ci*: Yan Shu" in Chapter 4, "The *Xiaoling* Collections (I)."

scattering like autumn clouds
nowhere to be found.

Hearing the zither, untying her pendants,
goddess companion,
tug as you may at the gossamer robes,
you cannot make her stay.

I urge you not to be
the sole man sober—
you'll have only a certain number of times
to be utterly drunk among the flowers.

Compare Yan Jidao:¹⁰

東風又作無情計。豔粉嬌紅吹滿地。
碧樓簾影不遮愁，還似去年今日意。
誰知錯管春殘事。到處登臨曾費淚。
此時金盞直須深，看盡落花能幾醉。

Once again the east wind
makes heartless plans.
Sensual whites and charming reds
are blown all over the ground.
The curtain shadows in the sapphire mansion
cannot hide away sorrow,
and again it is like the mood
of this same day last year.

Who understands it's a mistake to care
what happens in remnants of spring?
Climbing high places and looking down
has been a waste of tears.
At such a time the golden cup
has to be poured full,
how many times can you be drunk
watching flowers all fall away?

Yan Shu's breathless slide into the invitation to drunkenness becomes, in Yan Jidao, ironic personification (the east wind making "heartless

10. To "Yulou chun" 玉樓春. Tang Guizhang 1999, 305; Zhang Caoren, 412.

plans”), understanding the present as the repetition of the past and, through such understanding, the waste of tears. One might prefer the lyric of the father and another might prefer the lyric of the son, but these are two very different lyricists finding different routes to the same conclusion.

From his lyrics Yan Jidao’s biographers infer various romances and flirtations in different locations, but this is risky business. We “know” only a few things. We know that he once wrote a poem to Zheng Xia 鄭俠, who in 1074 incurred the emperor’s wrath by doing a painting of the starving peasantry gathered around the capital during a famine. Zheng Xia was thrown into prison, along with everyone who had any connection with him. A poem by Yan Jidao was found when the investigators were going through Zheng Xia’s belongings, and Yan Jidao too was arrested—and eventually released. This accident of characteristic legal overkill was probably the most noteworthy event in Yan Jidao’s life. Although we know that he held various low-level posts, we don’t know when and we mostly don’t know where—though we can infer a few by credible place names in the lyrics. We know that he met Huang Tingjian in the capital in 1079 because Huang Tingjian tells us so. Huang also tells us that Yan Jidao’s lyrics were much appreciated by gentlemen of quality, and we see that he clearly had social ties to many prominent figures by virtue of his father. In his own preface to his lyrics, Yan Jidao tells us that a collection of his lyrics had been assembled by Fan Chunren, the son of the famous statesman Fan Zhongyan, who had been a protégé of Yan Shu; that is, the social network that Yan Shu had built continued into the next generation. As the story goes, Yan Jidao wrote out some of his lyrics and presented them to Han Wei 韓維 (1017–98), who wrote back to Yan that he had a surplus of talent and a deficiency of virtue. The Han Wei story leads us over into the territory of anecdote, whose historical truth matters less than the image of the lyricist. There is the story that Su Shi wished to meet him and that Yan Jidao refused; another story has Huizong’s infamous minister Cai Jing asking for song lyrics, and Yan Jidao happily responding with a pair of new compositions, neither of which made any reference to Cai Jing. The anecdotes all contribute to the image of a man of pride who was the son of one of the most famous statesmen of the second quarter of the eleventh century, even though the son lived in humble circumstances.

If Yan Jidao's preface to his collection is a moment of asserting authorship, it is also part of the broader shift to treat song lyric as representing lived experience. Unlike Zhang Xian in his old age or Su Shi, Yan Jidao rarely makes references to the specific occasion. He tells us in his preface to his lyrics:

In them I not only gave an account of the things I held dear, but also depicted those momentary sounds and sights over a cup of wine, and the things on the mind of those spending time with me. It has occurred to me that the feelings stirred by the affairs of the world have never changed, from antiquity to the present."

Robert Ashmore gives a fine discussion of the significance of this and the following passage in terms of Yan Jidao's poetics. I am struck by the way in which the section quoted above makes a space for the song lyric as essentially personal and "biographical"—even if this "biographical" aspect does not rise to the level that the Chinese tradition would allow—by justifying his own experience as identical to the universal and repeatable, and by claiming to have simply written "the things on the mind of those spending time with me."

In a series like the one in Yan Jidao's passage quoted above, we should always note the final item, as if casually appended: "and the things on the mind of those spending time with me." We learn from this that the experiences are not necessarily his own, but we also discover what is on the minds of others with him—things that, after all, are universal. Although our deeply ingrained habits of reading would take this to refer to his male companions, in his lyrics he uses the phrase "spending time with me" (*tongyou* 同遊) to refer to the companionship of a man and a woman. The conventional song lyric practice of writing in a woman's voice is transformed based on his intimacy with singers on a human level; he talked to them. The old contested boundary between classical poetry and *yuefu*, between writing what one has experienced oneself and writing the experience of another, comes back, the rift sutured by the claim of the universality of experience.

If we think of this in practical terms, in lyrics before Yan Jidao we see some that seem to be the lyricist speaking as himself, and others—the abandoned woman, for example—that are clearly not the voice of the historical lyricist but the reproduction of a lyric type, speaking in the wrong gender until it is sung by the woman singer. In between those extremes is ambiguity. When Yan Jidao uses the persona lyric, what emerges is “the things on the mind of those spending time with me.” It is a brilliant compromise between the new age of song lyric and its tradition. As happened with the earlier eleventh-century lyricists, the new biographical standard imputes all texts to the person of the lyricist.

It is clear that in the second half of the eleventh century, as the practice of song lyric spread among the literary elite, the protocols of classical poetry were being transferred to song lyric. Although the anecdote is from a later time, Yan Shu's supposed retort to Liu Yong (“I never wrote anything like . . .”) is different. Yan Shu is not judging Liu Yong's moral character, but rather he is commenting on the fact that Liu Yong's lyrics had crossed a line of propriety. Han Wei's supposed response to Yan Jidao's gift of a copy of his lyrics is different: one can tell from the lyrics that Yan Jidao himself is deficient in morality. The lyricist is identified with and held responsible for what he writes—or, in the case of Ouyang Xiu, what circulates under his name. A song can no longer be “just a song.”

In the last part of his preface to Yan Jidao's lyrics, Huang Tingjian first speaks of his own song lyrics and how the monk Faxiu 法秀 told him that he, Huang, would be sent to Buddhist hell for encouraging licentiousness in his lyrics. Huang adds sardonically: “I can only suppose that he never saw Yan Jidao's works!” (特未見叔原之作耶). At the end of the preface he offers the no less sardonic image of a gaunt Confucian scholar who discovers the pleasures of women late in life and becomes an aging debauchee, concluding: “So I take it that this is the fault of Yan Jidao!” (是則叔原之罪也哉).

Memory

The collection, beginning as *Filling in Missing Yuefu Lyrics* (*Yuefu buwang* 樂府補亡), reappears as *Xiaoshan ci* 小山詞 in Huang Tingjian's preface and later in the *Zhizhai shulu jieti* as part of the Southern Song *Baijia ci* series.¹² Xiaoshan 小山 was Yan Jidao's pseudonym: unlike the song lyric collection of his father, this collection is named for the author. The collection resurfaces, as do many other Northern Song collections, in Wu Ne's *Baijia ci* in the fifteenth century, our earliest text of the lyrics and the source of Yan Jidao's preface. The Wu Ne edition also includes Huang Tingjian's preface, but that appears independently in the Southern Song edition of Huang Tingjian's works, which were widely available.

Although memory was part of the general nostalgia of earlier song lyric, its role increased dramatically in Yan Jidao's lyrics, which are filled with recollecting scenes from the past, attempting to recall specifics that elude him, or taking pleasure in the present as an escape from memory. None of this is entirely new in song lyric, but it appears so frequently in Yan Jidao that it seems to be at the center of his work: to say what is lost in perfect words.

Robert Ashmore makes a fine argument about the irrecoverable moment of performance, yet in Yan Jidao's lyrics, the words themselves in the moment of performance were often about what had been lost, with the singer's tears ruining her makeup—or the lyricist's tears. Often the memory invoked in the lyrical moment of performance was indeed the memory of a past performance. When those words once performed later reappeared in the written text, it embodied a chain of losses and differences, like the textual mutations that followed the lyrics as they passed from one singer to another.

In her "Discourse on Song Lyric" ("Cilun" 詞論), Li Qingzhao criticizes every predecessor that she mentions. Her greatest disapproval is reserved for the esteemed literati and classical poets who wrote song lyric as if it were classical poetry and failed to realize that song lyric was

12. It is clear that *Yuefu buwang*, with Yan Jidao's own preface, was only a partial gathering of his lyrics, perhaps only from the period of his life to which he made reference in the preface.

"something else." Then she turns her attention to a group of lyricists whom she considered to have had some sense of the musicality of the genre. Yan Jidao is the first name in this group, and she criticizes him for being "terribly wanting in exposition" (苦無鋪敘).¹³ While this is far from true of many of Yan Jidao's lyrics, it is true of some of his best. Memory, too, is "terribly wanting in exposition."

Consider the following lyric to "Lin jiang xian" 臨江仙:¹⁴

門草階前初見，穿針樓上曾逢。
羅裙香露玉釵風。靚妝眉沁綠，羞臉粉生紅。
流水便隨春遠，行雲終與誰同。
酒醒長恨錦屏空。相尋夢裏路，飛雨落花中。

First seen at the foot of the stairs in a "plant-finding game,"
once met upstairs at the time for threading needles.
Fragrant dew on gossamer skirt, wind in the jade hairpin.
Checking makeup, brow's arch dark green,
blushing cheeks, a red appears through powder.

The flowing water went far off with spring,
a moving cloud, together now with whom?
Sobering up, always resentful
that the brocade screen is empty.
I seek her on a road in dream
in the flying rain and fallen flowers.

Yan Jidao's lyrics sometimes resolve into a dream scene or remembered moment. In the first stanza a past love affair is reduced to a few fragmentary scenes: he recalls the moment he first saw her, an occasion when they met, how she looked with the dew on her skirt or the wind blowing her hair, the darkness of her brows, blushing through her face powder. This is the way memory works, by taking snapshots—and love is the world's greatest prompter of amateur photography. The snapshot

13. This is the same term Li Zhiyi had earlier used for the virtues of Liu Yong, referring to the expansiveness enabled by *manci* (see p. 351). I presume that Li Qingzhao was not criticizing the concision of *xiaoling* in general, but rather the logical coherence of Liu Yong's *xiaoling*.

14. Tang Guizhang 1999, 285; Zhang Caoren, 273.

always includes details of the site, which have no meaning beyond the fact that the person was there "at the foot of the stairs."

In films about love affairs, the opening and closing credits sometimes resort to a montage of snapshots (almost always of the woman): "X at the beach," "X walking," "X eating peanuts." The audience, male and female alike, though without any particular affection for X (who after all is a fictional or semi-fictional character), is often touched by that familiar structure of attention, the way in which memory conserves what it means to look on someone with love. This has nothing to do with the "objectification" of the beloved—for it is recognition of the pose and the expression rather than representation of the body that commands attention—though it has a great deal to do with idealization. In effect this is what Yan Jidao is doing in the opening stanza of this poem, creating a history of love with a series of quickly drawn images.

The opening lines use seasonal markers (festivals) to differentiate two occasions and create an interval from spring ("plant-finding game") to autumn ("time for threading needles"), so that when the image of the woman is finally given in the third line, she is strangely outside of time. The lyricist's attention is to margins of contact—not even to her clothes in their own right but to where they touch the wind and dew on the upper and lower edges of her figure. Having circumscribed the margins of an interval and her physical presence, the first stanza closes by focusing on her face, which turns red in embarrassment, marking an awareness of a potentially romantic encounter.

The stanza transition brings us back to a present, from which the first stanza appears as a past. Her sexual life (*xingyun*, a "moving cloud") is now speculatively with an unknown other; the moment of encounter brought a blush; but displaced elsewhere and into memory, she becomes the goddess. When he sobers up and awakens, he finds that the space within the bed-screen is empty, abandonment of the longing male being the hallmark of the goddess. In the closing lines, faced with such emptiness, he returns immediately to his dream and the beauty of the closing image (the *menglu*, the "road of dreams") where there is nothing but rain and fallen flowers. It is not a return to her full presence, but to the margin of the spring that has already passed, the moment of loss. The lyric never reaches the destination.

It might be useful here to compare a very similar lyric appearing in both the Feng Yansi and the Ouyang Xiu collections. Growing up in the household of a father who so admired Feng Yansi, Yan Jidao may have known the song from a young age. In Feng Yansi's collection it is to "Que ta zhi," and in *Jinti yuefu* it is to "Die lian hua" (it is not included in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*).¹⁵

幾日行雲何處去，忘卻歸來，不道春將暮。
 百草千花寒食路，香車繫在誰家樹。
 淚眼倚樓頻獨語，雙燕飛來時，陌上相逢否。
 撩亂春愁如柳絮，悠悠夢裏無尋處。

Where has the moving cloud gone
 after so many days;
 it has forgotten to come back,
 not caring that spring is about to end.
 A hundred plants and a thousand flowers
 on the roads of Cold Food Festival,
 her coach of aromatic wood is tied
 to the tree of whose home?
 With tear-filled eyes I lean high in the tower,
 often speaking to myself,
 when a pair of swallows comes flying,
 did they encounter her on the street?
 Spring melancholy is a tangle
 like the willow floss,
 far, far away in dream
 there is nowhere to find her.

Yan Jidao turns the account of a moment of longing into a fragmentary sequence of scenes. "First seen" and "once met" in his lyric defines an interval from spring to autumn. Loss in the older lyric is measured in days, but in Yan Jidao's lyric it occurs in an indefinite past, in which the feeling of loss seems permanent.

Gone is the rather silly claim of asking the swallows if they have seen her. But the most striking change is in the closing, where the older lyric

15. Huang Jinde, 25. Tang Guizhang 1999 (162) accepts the Feng Yansi attribution.

ends with the hopelessness of finding her in dream. Yan Jidao goes off into dream space anyway, a scene close at hand rather than one defined by distances, a disorienting blur of rain and flowers.

In another of Yan Jidao's lyrics to "Lin jiang xian," some of the same components are reassembled into something quite different.¹⁶

夢後樓臺高鎖，酒醒簾幕低垂。去年春恨卻來時。
落花人獨立，微雨燕雙飛。
記得小蘋初見，兩重心字羅衣。琵琶弦上說相思。
當時明月在，曾照彩雲歸。

After the dream, mansion on terrace, closed up on high,
I sober up, the curtains are hanging low.
The moment when last year's spring bitterness returns.
The person standing alone in falling flowers,
light rain, swallows flying in pairs.

I recall when I first saw Xiaopin,
gossamer robes, two layers of the character "heart."¹⁷
In the strings of the pipa she tells of longing.
The bright moon of that time is still here,
it once shone on the colored cloud going off.

Here again is the "sobering up," and the sense of loss, but in place of the emptiness of the space between the bed-screens there is another emptiness screened in by the curtains. The only access to a world outside his enclosure is in dream and memory. Instead of finding himself alone in the rain and falling flowers in a dream, he sees her there in the falling flowers and light rain of memory. The fact that these lines are lifted verbatim from the Five Dynasties poet Weng Hong 翁宏 does not matter: the lines have found a better home—just as to Su Shi Ouyang Xiu's citation of Wang Wei's line in the Ping Mountain Hall lyric becomes, in Su Shi's lyric, what Ouyang Xiu said.¹⁸ The swallows

16. Tang Guizhang 1999, 286; Zhang Caoren, 282.

17. There is controversy about the phrase *xin zi* 心字. It may be 1) the incense used to scent the robes; 2) the shape of her collar (Yang Shen, followed by Hu Yunyi); or 3) a pattern on the robe (Yu Pingbo). The third possibility makes the most sense.

18. See "Chaozhong cuo" in "Ouyang Xiu and His Collections," in Chapter 5, "The Xiaoling Collections (II)."

in pairs, nature's figure for lovers' bliss, are allowed back through the borrowing.

The "first seeing," which opened the earlier "Lin jiang xian," returns here again in the stanza transition, where we have the beloved's name. The scene of absence in the first stanza is replaced with a legible presence, two layers of the word "heart," a wonderful literalization of "wearing one's heart on one's sleeve." It is the surface promise of the interior, which of course comes out in song.

The "moving cloud" of the preceding "Lin jiang xian" becomes "the colored cloud going off." The source is Li Bai's "Lyrics on Taking Pleasure in the Palace 宮中行樂詞: "I grieve only that as the singers and dancers scatter / they transform into colored clouds flying off" (只愁歌舞散, 化作彩雲飛). The Tang poet does the metaphor as a metamorphosis; that is no longer necessary for Yan Jidao. In the end we have another scene of absence: a moonlit space in which there was once the beloved departing. From the network of lyrics we know that the singer, figured conventionally as the goddess, will go off to be someone else's companion.

In a lyric to "Mulan hua," the "road of dreams" becomes a literal road, as the poet revisits the former lodgings of the beloved, from which she has long departed.¹⁹

秋千院落重簾幕。彩筆閑來題繡戶。
牆頭丹杏雨餘花，門外綠楊風後絮。
朝雲信斷知何處。應作襄王春夢去。
紫騮認得舊遊蹤，嘶過畫橋東畔路。

The courtyard with its swing,
layered curtains in the twilight.
My brush of many colors came idly
to write verses on her richly carved door.
Red apricots above the wall,
flowers in the last of the rain,
outside the gate, green willows,
catkins after the wind.
All news is cut off from the clouds of dawn,
I wonder where she is.

19. Tang Guizhang 1999, 300; Zhang Caoren, 379.

She must have gone off to be
 King Xiang's spring dream.
 My fine steed can recognize
 the tracks of former visits
 and whinnies passing the road to the east
 of the painted bridge.

We begin with a deserted courtyard in spring; the curtains are down (marking her absence), and we wonder if a swing is indeed set up there now or if this is simply where the swing had been set up in some earlier spring. The metonymic visitor is his writing brush, which writes poems on the door to her chambers.²⁰ The poet has reached the site of love, but the beloved is long gone.

In the stanza transition we learn that she has been gone a while and has found another lover, a topic Yan Jidao brings up often, extending the figure of the singer as the goddess of Wu Mountain (who said she was the "clouds of dawn") to the lightness of a cloud, always moving on. The poet desires to return to the past and repeat it, but that desire usually ends in failure. The figure of the horse, whinnying as it passes the familiar route, is the foil for his failure; for the horse it is pure repetition.

As Yan Jidao keeps returning toward the beloved of the past, he also returns to the material of his own lyrics to recast it. This is more than the conventional material shared among the earlier writers of *xiaoling*; for example, there is a bridge to be crossed on the way to her lodgings; if we have a horse that whinnies in recognizing the familiar route, in another lyric we have a dreaming soul that can "tread" the willow catkins, moved from the first stanza of the preceding lyric to the

20. Yan Jidao certainly knew the story associated with the term *caibi* 彩筆 (the "brush of many colors") of the poet Jiang Yan (444–505), who as a youth dreamed that the poet Guo Pu (276–324) gave him a brush of many colors, after which Jiang Yan's literary skill increased greatly. Later in his life he dreamed of Guo Pu again, who wanted his brush back, after which Jiang's talent deserted him. By the Tang (except in Du Fu) it had come to be a simple reference to talent in writing verse. The other, more important association is Li Shangyin's "Willow Branch," a demimondaine who was taken by someone else after a failed tryst with the poet. Li Shangyin sent his cousin to inscribe a set of poems on her home in Luoyang.

closing image. Both lyrics put the cloud (the goddess of Wu Mountain) and King Xiang of Chu, visited by the goddess in dream, in the same antepenultimate line.

The compulsion to return and repeat does not need a long interval of separation. Even after going home he returns toward the beloved in dream, but it is only a movement "toward"—the final image is often only on the road, as in the following lyric, to "Zhegu tian":²¹

小令尊前見玉簫。銀燈一曲太妖嬈。
歌中醉倒誰能恨，唱罷歸來酒未消。
春悄悄，夜迢迢。碧雲天共楚宮遙。
夢魂慣得無拘檢，又踏楊花過謝橋。

Drinking to a short lyric,
I saw Yuxiao.
A silver lamp, one melody,
so bewitchingly lovely.
If one falls down drunk during the song,
who can complain?—
the singing done, I go back home,
the ale not yet worn off.
The springtime is silent and still,
the night lasts on and on.
The sky with sapphire clouds,
as remote as the Chu palace.
In dream my soul is used to
being without restraint,
and once again treads the willow catkins
over Miss Xie's bridge.²²

Every line of the first stanza is filled with song, which ends in the last line of the stanza, picked up in the stillness of the night in the stanza transition. Silence becomes distance, and the sense of distance leads

21. Tang Guizhang 1999, 292; Zhang Caoren, 323.

22. "Miss Xie" is the representative figure of the professional singer-entertainer. We might note that while Yan Jidao's representative scene of composition in his preface is in the company of the domestic singers of his friends, many of his lyrics refer to the world of professional entertainers, with their own lodgings to be visited by their lover.

the soul to go back. The "clouds" and the "Chu palace" are a clear reference to the goddess of Wu Mountain and in other lyrics often suggest that the beloved has found another lover. But there is no hint of that here—he seems to have just left her place and headed for home, and the "distance" is more subjective than pragmatic. Like dream, many of the songs seem to have mechanisms of association that work with differing degrees of aptness for the ostensible topic of the lyric.

In the preceding lyrics the closing image is at once going toward or departing, and here the dreaming soul becomes distinctly corporeal in the process, "treading" the fluffy willow catkins.

Suppose he does meet with the beloved again. This occurs in the world, but more importantly, it had become part of the variable "love story" that lay behind lyrics. It is common in Liu Yong's lyrics, where the encounter often has human complications that make it interesting, but far from repetition. In Yan Jidao it is the occasion of almost perfect repetition of the past because it is an occasion of memory, initially presented with such immediacy that we do not yet know it is memory. This is a lyric to "Zhegu tian," one of Yan Jidao's most famous.²³

彩袖殷勤捧玉鐘。當年拚卻醉顏紅。
舞低楊柳樓心月，歌盡桃花扇影風。
從別後，憶相逢。幾回魂夢與君同。
今宵剩把銀釭照，猶恐相逢是夢中。

Brightly colored sleeves earnestly
held out the jade flagon for me.
Back then we didn't care
if drunken faces flushed red.
She danced the moon low in the willows upstairs,
and sang away the breeze in the shadow
of the peach blossom fan.
After we parted,
I recalled when we met.
How often has my soul in dream
been together with you.

23. Tang Guizhang 1999, 290; Zhang Caoren, 310.

This night too I keep taking in hand
 the silver lamp to shine on you,
 still fearing that this meeting
 is in fact in a dream.

The first line, invoking the immediacy of the moment of the party and its invitation to drunkenness, could have been taken straight from Yan Shu. The person is invisible, but we know it is a woman from her "brightly colored sleeves." Two hands hold (*peng* 捧) the flagon thrust toward the speaker, urging him to drink. The beginning of the next line, "back then" (*dangnian* 當年), at once displaces the immediacy of the first line into the past, into an image of memory, and comments on it from a stance that acknowledges the difference from the present: "we didn't care if drunken faces flushed red." That time of "not caring" or "throwing oneself into something" (*pinque* 拚卻) is remarkable only from the present world, which is filled with cares.

The couplet that follows, containing Yan Jidao's most famous lines, is very much a "poetic" construction of the remembered past, fusing the moment of the past with time's passage. We could do a painfully prosaic paraphrase of the first line: "While you danced, the moon gradually sank low in the willows seen from the upper storey." But the poetic restructuring of relations makes her dancing transitive, as if her dance controls the markers of time's passage that constrain the interval of party and performance in the quotidian world.

The parallel couplet makes the second line work like the first, but here the prosaic paraphrase breaks down; we would have to say, "You sang so long that the spring breeze finally ended." To rationalize it, we need many parties and occasions of song throughout that spring "back then"—which there no doubt were. But complications arise. The spring breeze blows down the peach blossoms, marking the passage of the season; but the peach blossoms on the singer's fan are held in stasis, resistant to the real breeze and to the singer's breath in song, which is also *feng* 風 ("wind" or "breeze"). The peach blossoms on the fan have all the fragile permanence of the remembered image. As the woman, dancing and singing, held the speaker in rapt absorption for the whole season, she is in control of time: she makes the long interval only a

moment in memory, but a moment held in stasis in memory, and the lyricist finds words for that power.

The stanza transition speaks of parting, of the inevitable end of that prolonged moment and its transformation into memory, to which he always returns. The desire to return to the moment becomes repetition in dream.

Only at the end do we realize that they are indeed back together again—in bed, in semi-darkness. The speaker, evidently sleepless, keeps taking the lamp in hand to shine on her, to confirm that she is really there and that this is not just another dream. The glow of an oil lamp on her face is perfect repetition, because *she* is here tonight—the same face that is preserved in memory. But every time he puts the lamp down, he is uneasy and has to look again.

The placing of a lamp by the bed by which to reveal the beloved's face was, of course, learned from Liu Yong.²⁴

須臾放了殘鍼線。脫羅衣、恁情無限。
留取帳前燈，時時待、看伊嬌面。

A moment later she puts down the last of her sewing.
She takes off her gossamer clothes,
giving passion free rein.
A lamp was left by the bed-hangings,
now and then
he could look at her charming face.

Compared to Yan Jidao, Liu Yong is innocence itself. When lovers stage a sexual encounter in Liu Yong, the lamp reveals the unification of image and physical presence. In Yan Jidao's lyric, however, the possibility of body and image becoming one is recognized as a problem, or as a virtual impossibility. And the lamp, taken in hand, is a desperate act to verify presence—a presence so exactly matching image that it might be only the image of a dream.

It is hard not to see Yan Jidao's passion for perfect repetition in relation to his conservatism in song lyric. Both are a desire to return to and repeat something he knows is irrevocably lost.

24. Tang Guizhang 1999, 48.

Heavy drinking and memory are at odds. Sometimes he cannot remember. In place of his beautiful scenes of memory and dream, he is left only with the categorical memory, as in the following lyric to "Die lian hua," perhaps his finest.²⁵

醉別西樓醒不記。春夢秋雲，聚散真容易。
斜月半窗還少睡。畫屏開展吳山翠。
衣上酒痕詩裏字。點點行行，總是淒涼意。
紅燭自憐無好計。夜寒空替人垂淚。

Drunk when I left her at western hall,
sobering, I can't recall.
Springtime dreams, autumn clouds,
scatter all too easily.
The sinking moon half fills the window,
again little sleep.
The painted screen leisurely spreads
the azure of Wu's mountains.
The stains of ale upon my clothes,
the words in my poems.
A lot of dots and lines,
taken together signify loneliness.
The red candle feels bad
that it has no good solution.
In night's cold on my behalf
it sheds tears in vain.

The new is built upon the old. Although the motif of not remembering picks up a special weight in this verse by a lyricist of memory, it comes from earlier *xiaoling* and the drunken reveler's not remembering who helped him on his horse, or the beloved's asking the lyricist if he remembers what she said. While we might not want to follow those who construct a love affair around someone in the "western mansion," clearly he is parting from the beloved. The lyric does not specify what he doesn't recall, but the term used here, *ji* 記, is to recall specifics. In the next lyric we will consider, the distinction is quite clear: he remembers (*yi* 憶) that they stayed up all night but doesn't recall (*ji*) what was said on parting.

25. Tang Guizhang 1999, 288; Zhang Caoren, 295.

The "springtime dream" and the cloud both have erotic associations. He doesn't recall exactly what happened, but he understands the general category. *Jusan* 聚散, translated simply as "scatter," is literally "coming together and scattering," a general principle that in the discourse of love refers to how lovers come together and eventually separate.

Now, having sobered up, he lies awake, looking at the landscape painting on the bed-screen that surrounds him on three sides. This line is an enigma, though it too is categorical: he recognizes it as "Wu's mountains," a mood of serenity and beauty, "recognizable" as a category—though no one could ever say which mountains were in the painting or the place from which they could be seen in this way.

The stanza transition leads him to try to read the traces, along with representations that were also understood as "traces." "Dots and lines" are the components of a Chinese character, but they are just as easily the "spots and streaks" of ale spilled on his clothes. The messy traces of the recent past and its representation in poetry are in some ways the same: they are texts to be read. What happened is not only lost to memory, but its traces are illegible except as a categorical "gloominess." The word translated as "signify" is a noun, *yi* 意, often translated as "meaning," but it is commonly used in contemporary poetics to classify a poem under a general category of mood or theme. All those "dots and lines" don't tell you exactly how it was; they are colloquially "taken together" to represent some easily stated category of feeling.

In the end we come to a reworking of the second couplet of a famous quatrain by Du Mu 杜牧 titled "Presented on Parting" 贈別:²⁶

蠟燭有心還惜別，替人垂淚到天明。

The wax candle has a heart (/wick)
and so feels bad about our parting,
On our behalf it sheds tears
all the way to dawn.

In Du Mu's poem this is significant because the lovers about to part are without tears, not from lack of feeling, but from too much feeling. The

26. QTs 28295.

personification of the candle is carried a step further by Yan Jidao, who attributes the inability to find a solution to the candle, so that all it can do is shed tears. We presume that this occurs in Yan Jidao's solitude, but it could be a flashback to the moment of the two lovers' parting. If the former it is ironic in that Du Mu's poem is "presented" to the beloved on parting—perhaps like the poems he now sees as "a lot of dots and lines." At last the only thing he can turn to is poetic figuration drawn from an earlier poet.

In a lyric to "Yulou chun" Yan Jidao comes back to the slippage of memory, here apparently after a much longer interval.²⁷

當年信道情無價。桃葉尊前論別夜。
臉紅心緒學梅妝，眉翠工夫如月畫。
來時醉倒旗亭下。知是阿誰扶上馬。
憶曾挑盡五更燈，不記臨分多少話。

In those days I truly thought
that love was beyond price.
Drinking together with Peachleaf
on the night we spoke of parting,
Her cheeks reddened with feeling
as she worked at her plum-blossom makeup,
the time spent on dark blue brows
painted like the moon.

When coming back, I fell over drunk
by the tavern,
I have no idea who it was that
helped me onto my horse.
I remember that we kept trimming the lamp
to the last hour of night,
But I don't recall all the things we said
at the moment of parting.

As in other lyrics he remembers images—images that have nothing to do with the lovers' parting—he remembers her doing her toilette. He remembers *that* they stayed awake all night. But he cannot recall what might be the most important thing—what was said at the moment of parting.

27. Tang Guizhang 1999, 306; Zhang Caoren, 416.

Songs about Songs

At this point we need ourselves to remember that these songs of retrospect are indeed themselves songs, sometimes remembering past songs, but songs to be sung in another present. Far more than his predecessors in *xiaoling*, many of Yan Jidao's finest lyrics present something of a problem when we imagine them being sung in the present.

The promise of the song lyric is its immediacy, its realization in the present moment. Most of Yan Shu's lyrics fulfill this promise. Yan Jidao, by contrast, often writes "meta-lyric," on the process of writing lyric and how it might become fully realized in song performance. Consider the following lyric to "Zhegu tian."²⁸

手撚香箋憶小蓮。欲將遺恨倩誰傳。
歸來獨臥逍遙夜，夢裏相逢酩酊天。
花易落，月難圓。只應花月似歡緣。
秦箏算有心情在，試寫離聲入舊弦。

I finger the scented notepaper,
remembering Xiaolian.
I want to convey my lingering resentment,
but whom can I trust to take it to her?
I came home and lay down alone
in the peaceful night,
in my dreams I met her
under reeling drunk skies.
The flowers fall too easily,
the moon is rarely full.
It must be that the flowers and moon
are like pleasure's destiny.
I reckon that her Qin zither
still has feeling in it,
I try to pour separation's sounds
into those old strings.

28. Tang Guizhang 1999, 193; Zhang Caoren, 332.

Often in such lyrics the reader wonders if the present lyric is the lyric he is talking about, or if it is some other lyric. He begins by picking up the paper on which to write a lyric (or perhaps just a message), but seems to put it down again because of the hopelessness of the lyric ever reaching her. The failure of the lyric to reach her is replaced by the dream meeting, beautifully phrased, in which the heavens themselves become "reeling drunk."

The second stanza—presumably following from the experience of the failed song and the dream meeting—may refer to the present lyric. He no longer talks about conveying what he feels to her, but requires the medium of her zither (*zheng*), which "still has feeling"—the capacity to express feeling. A song, like that destined for the notepaper in the beginning, seems to be only an imperfect message on paper; the message can be realized only in music and performance. *Xie* 寫, translated as "pour," is etymologically more like "leak out" or "express," and it is also to "copy out" in writing. He is not, as in the first stanza, trying to "tell" his resentment"; rather, he wants the sounds of the song to be fused with the zither's notes to become the "sounds of separation." He has heard those strings played before, and they have been played often: they are "old strings." The music, "*Zhegu tian*," is an old, familiar tune, which can express almost anything. Only when the strings, the melody, and the words come together under her fingers and in her voice will the message be real.

As so often in Yan Jidao we find a cluster of claims and images recurring in a number of lyrics in a different order. In the lyric above it is attempting to write a lyric, feelings hard to convey, the expression in music, and the dream as the alternative to the failed lyric (with the dream reported in the "later" meta-lyric). The following lyric is to "*Qingping yue*":²⁹

么弦寫意。意密弦聲碎。書得鳳箋無限事。猶恨春心難寄。
臥聽疏雨梧桐。雨餘淡月朦朧。一夜夢魂何處，那回楊葉樓中。

The thinnest string expresses one's thoughts.

When the thoughts are secret, the notes of the string shatter.

29. Tang Guizhang 1999, 299; Zhang Caoren, 370.

On the phoenix notepaper I got to write endless matters.
 But I still resent that a springtime heart is hard to convey.
 I lay down and listen to the sparse raindrops in the tung tree.
 In the fading rain the pale moonlight was hazy.
 The whole night through, where was my dreaming soul?—
 in the house with willow leaves of that time.

The thinnest or “yao” string is the fourth string on a balloon guitar (pipa), which produces the highest and most moving notes. He begins with music, played on a woman’s instrument. We assume he is anticipating the moment of performance for which he is writing his lyrics later in the stanza—essentially the theme of the second stanza of the preceding lyric. But no matter how much he writes, he doesn’t feel he can convey his love. Again we have the “meta-lyric”—the song lyric about song lyrics.

The failure of song lyric is replaced by a dream that is not about conveying his love to the beloved, but about returning to the old site of love. What is remarkable is the vernacular *nahui* 那回 (“that time”)—meaning, more specifically, “on that occasion.” What happened on that occasion is known only to the lyricist and his beloved and has significance for them alone. For everyone else it is the sign of privately shared knowledge.

Such private knowledge belongs to the lyricist and his beloved. The lyric moves on to be performed by the singer who does not know what happened “that time.” Since the singer-performer has been written into the words of the lyric itself, if she performs it well, one might believe that she does know, that the lyric “matters” to her. While the theme occurred in earlier song lyric, Yan Jidao’s intensification of the love lyric as personal biography at the same time intensifies the split between the song as an account of actual feeling and the song as pure performance.³⁰ What is the boundary between the mastery of song that performs real feeling and real feeling that is realized in song? This is an impossible theoretical question for many reasons, but it became a thematic question in song lyric.³¹

30. See Owen 2008.

31. Tang Guizhang 1999, 305; Zhang Caoren, 408.

To "Yulou chun"

清歌學得秦娥似。金屋瑤臺知姓字。
 可憐春恨一生心，長帶粉痕雙袖淚。
 從來懶話低眉事。今日新聲誰會意。
 坐中應有賞音人，試問回腸曾斷未。

In her clear song she has successfully studied
 the semblance of the maid of Qin.
 In gilded chambers and marble terraces
 her name is known.
 Pitiably how, once the resentment of spring
 came about in her heart,
 she always bears the tear-stains of powder
 on her paired sleeves.
 Always she has been reluctant to talk about
 why she lowers her brows.
 In the new song she sings today
 who knows what is on her mind?
 At the party there surely is
 someone who understands music,
 I wonder if his tormented heart
 has been broken or not.

The lyricist here is a new audience, who does not simply listen to the song but notices the powder on her sleeves, left by tracks of dried tears. Like the "maid of Qin," she has achieved mastery of performance, but her personal experience of love, "the resentment of spring," puts a new edge to her song. Most listeners hear her "new song" and hear only her skill. The true connoisseur of music knows that there is something more behind the skill. The lesson is a simple one, but one that gains a peculiarly intense significance in the understanding of song lyric on to the present—if not for the performer, then for the lyricist.

If we care to risk speculation on the biographical imaginary of someone almost without biography, Yan Jidao was not only the lover of singers, but he grew up in a household with singers. For all their training in how to feign emotion, they too could love and be hurt. They were, after all, only young teenagers. What catches his attention in the following

lyric to "Cai sangzi," as in the preceding lyric, is the margin, the trace of real feeling.³²

西樓月下當時見，淚粉偷勻。歌罷還顰。恨隔爐煙看未真。
別來樓外垂楊綠，幾換青春。倦客紅塵。長記樓中粉淚人。

In the moonlight in the western mansion

I saw her back then,
smoothing over tear-streaked powder
surreptitiously.

When the song ended she knit her brows again.
I was frustrated how, blocked by brazier smoke,
I could not see clearly.

Since I parted from willow fronds
dangling outside the mansion,
how many times have green springs come and gone?
Weary traveler in the world's red dust.
I always recall in that mansion
the person with tears in her powder.

It is a striking image, the memory of a singer with tear-streaked face powder, seen through a daze of smoke. The singer with tears was the legacy of the *xiaoling* of an earlier generation; the singer, trying to hide those tears believing she is unobserved, is Yan Jidao's version. When she performs, she smiles—these are "bought smiles" (*maixiao* 買笑)—but once the song is over, her brows knit in a frown. The whole second stanza is devoted to the persistence of that seemingly trivial memory, returning to repeat the image in the closing.

Secretly wiping away tears was a trope. It is not the image itself, but the attention Yan Jidao vests in it. Compare Su Shi in the first stanza of a lyric to "Jiangchengzi" 江城子 of 1074, seeing off the governor of Hangzhou, Chen Xiang 陳襄.³³

翠蛾羞黛怯人看。掩霜紈。淚偷彈。

32. Tang Guizhang 1999, 324; Zhang Caoren, 535.

33. Tang Guizhang 1999, 385, under the tune title "Jiangshenzi 江神子"; Zou and Wang, 78.

且盡一尊，收淚唱陽關。
漫道帝城天樣遠，天易見，見君難。

Dark brows, embarrassed mascara,
fearful that others will notice.
She covers them with frost-white satin [fan].
Surreptitiously she wipes away tears.
But now finish a goblet of ale,
And, ceasing tears, sing "Yang Pass."
Don't tell me that the imperial city
is as far away as the heavens,
the heavens are easy to see,
seeing you will be hard.

This is not Su Shi at his most memorable, but it is characteristic. What is at stake here are not the private feelings of a woman, but the feelings of the singer as a servant, grieving for the departure of her employer, which ultimately reflects the good qualities of the departing governor Chen Xiang. The figure of the weeping singer, the mark of genuine feeling, endures—but its significance has completely changed.

Performance can be the means to convey true feeling, but in itself, it is only performance. Yan Jidao looks to those moments when he can see through it to the truth of the heart. At last he recognizes that it may all be only himself. The old songs tell him how she lies awake yearning for the man who is separated from her; he writes those songs too—but he also tells us that you can't trust the truth of it (*wuping* 無憑). He wants to repeat the old story of longing in his present, but he realizes that she may not really care at all. She is trained to sing the lyrics she has memorized as if she means it. She sings, dances, casts glances, holds hands, makes love as if she means it. He knows she doesn't care, but he still wants her to come back and mean it, or at least return to a past when he did not know illusion was illusion:³⁴

To "Pusa man"

相逢欲話相思苦。淺情肯信相思否。還恐漫相思。淺情人不知。
憶曾攜手處。月滿窗前路。長到月來時。不眠猶待伊。

34. Tang Guizhang 1999, 304; Zhang Caoren, 405.

When we met I wanted to talk to her
about the pain of longing.
But could someone with such shallow feelings
believe in longing?
And then I feared I longed for her in vain.
The person with shallow feelings did not realize.
I remembered where we once held hands.
The moon filled the road before the window.
Now always when the moon comes,
I don't sleep, still waiting for her.

This both does and does not belong to the old *xiaoling*. One can think of this as the moment the old song tradition died simply by imagining this lyric being sung by a professional singer at a party. Fickle men have their own terms; *qianqing* 淺情 ("shallow feelings") marks a woman in song lyric. The singer who performs such a lyric with consummate art, in which the feeling is realized only in performance, in effect destroys her art and its power to create illusion. This is not to say that the singer might not mean the words she sings, but it is hard to tell.

III

The Age of Su Shi



SEVEN

Su Shi

Around 1073 song lyric was beginning to acquire a history. Although lyrics had long been composed for imperial events (and those lyrics were often preserved), by this time literati seem to have started composing lyrics more widely for performance on social occasions. These lyrics, if too specific or not attached to a circumstantial anecdote, however, were less often preserved. The dominant mode of song lyric seems to still have been lyrics that could be reused on almost any occasion, probably preserved in songbooks, which might be used by singers and perhaps increasingly read by aficionados. Such lyrics, both old and new, were performed in response to a considerable demand for entertainment at gentry occasions and in local entertainment quarters. Collections of famous lyricists had begun to appear, which is not to say that all the lyrics in those songbooks were, in fact, composed by the lyricists under whose names they were collected.

What we want to know from the inadequate evidence is 1) when individual lyric collections entered circulation, and 2) how widely they circulated. The fact that we cannot answer these two questions with precision does not detract from their importance. We can, at least, lay out the imperfect evidence. The monk Wenying 文瑩 claimed that putatively forged lyrics by Ouyang Xiu were circulating in the Huangyou reign (1049–54), but that he “heard” them being sung.¹ This

1. Zhang Huimin, 84; Egan 1984, 168.

predates Chen Shixiu's Feng Yansi collection. We have a stabilizing date for Chen Shixiu's edition of Feng Yansi: 1058. A second stabilizing date is Zhang Xian's death in 1078, a *terminus ante quem* for Yan Shu's collection, for which Zhang wrote a preface. By 1075 Su Shi could make a general comment on Liu Yong's lyrics, which might suggest he had seen a collection (but might also suggest simply an inference from a few lyrics he had heard). This is very fragile circumstantial evidence—especially considering the scale of circulation—but it is what we have. This gives us a roughly two-decade timeframe for the initial appearance of song lyric collections and the establishment of a precedent. A decade later, in 1089, a titled collection of songs of a living lyricist, Yan Jidao, appeared. Somewhere around this time, perhaps a bit later, the lyricist He Zhu was seeking a preface from Zhang Lei—presuming that he had compiled a version of his own collected lyrics. In the next few decades we see many lyricists compiling their own collections. While hardly precise, this is a three-decade frame from the first known collection of an individual lyricist to lyricists making collections of their own works.

Su Shi provides the earliest substantial corpus of datable lyrics. In 1073 he was posted to Hangzhou, far more a center for literati culture than his earlier post in Chang'an, a backwater in the Northern Song and thereafter, had been. Although modern editors have tried to date some of Su Shi's lyrics earlier than 1073, the evidence for such dating is slim at best. In 1073, however, he was writing song lyrics for social occasions, using primarily *xiaoling* tunes, which were still the staple of literati parties. These early efforts in the genre were good; but, in contrast to Yan Jidao, they were very much the efforts of an outsider to the song lyric world. In Hangzhou he met the octogenarian Zhang Xian, whose securely datable lyrics of this era mostly bore little resemblance to the *xiaoling* world of Yan Shu's parties and often sounded like lyricized classical poems, composed for specific occasions.²

Su Shi was arguably the greatest talent of the Song—and the dynasty's largest ego. Freed of the weight of song lyric's thematic conventions and the moods associated with them, he very quickly learned what the

2. This is not to say that Zhang Xian might not still have been writing *xiaoling* in the old style; dating simply is more reliable when there is a note on the occasion or internal references to a specific occasion. This is far more common in *manci*.

form could do. By 1074, on his way to his new post in Mizhou, he was writing *manci* in his characteristic idiom. It is significant that these were not composed for literati gatherings but were sent as verse epistles, as classical poems had long been composed. Essentially, Su Shi saw song lyric not as a social musical practice with all that this entailed, but as a new and different verse form that opened up new possibilities of expression—self-expression.

Here we must take up the controversy that has swirled around Su Shi's song lyrics at least from the twelfth century on: was he really writing song lyric (*ci*)—or was this simply old wine in a new bottle? For some, Su Shi was the most important lyricist ever, who freed song lyric from its narrow scope of theme and expression; for others, Su Shi was an aberration in the genre. This controversy resolved itself in the Ming with a binary split into two traditions: the first one, *wanyue* 婉約 ("tender and delicate"), represented earlier song lyric and its continuity to the present; the other, *haofang* 豪放 (roughly translatable as "brash"), was represented by Su Shi and his talented epigone Xin Qiji in the twelfth century. There is nothing particularly subtle or elusive about these terms, but English translation can never quite get it right. *Wanyue* is essentially passive; *haofang* is active. While many scholars recognize how this binary fails to account for the real variety of song lyric, it remains the most conventional way to think of the genre, persuasive perhaps because it resonates with the conventional binary of gender attributes.

It should be said from the beginning that Su Shi was *not* simply writing classical poetry in song lyric form—even though he drew on the topics and techniques of classical poetry. He simply realized that the song lyric form made it possible to write in ways that were fundamentally different from classical poetry. The problem was that Su Shi's literary personality so indelibly marked his name on this new mode of writing song lyric that he effectively ended it as a future possibility. While the so-called *wanyue* tradition continued to grow and change, with new lyricists doing things that had never been done before (including learning from Su Shi), lyricists in the *haofang* tradition were virtually defined by their resemblance to Su Shi. Even Xin Qiji, clearly the best of such lyricists after Su Shi, was as Su's devoted admirer clearly

trying to be “like Su Shi.” Su Shi did something utterly new and unrepeatable except by imitation.

If we imagine Chen Shixiu, the collector of Feng Yansi’s lyrics, asking the singer, “Who wrote those words?,” that same scenario would never come to mind in the case of Su Shi’s lyrics. First, Su Shi’s lyrics did not suit the romantically charged ethos of the mid-eleventh century party. But second, and most important, few could fail to recognize the author in most of Su’s lyrics—his signature was in the words of the song. If there is an uncharacteristic lyric in Su’s collection, a lyric that sounds too much like normative song lyrics, its authenticity is called into question by scholars. His was neither “song lyric proper” (*bense*), nor was it classical poetry in song lyric form—it was a new kind of poetry.³

As Ron Egan has so well described, one of the most striking characteristics of Su Shi’s appearance in the world of song lyric is the full eruption of the autobiographical mode into song lyric. Modern editions are often “chronologically arranged” (*biannian* 編年), and the lyrics are read in relation to the voluminous documentation we have on Su Shi’s life, encouraged by Su’s own occasional titles often combined with long prefaces.⁴ If Li Qingzhao was later to stress song lyric’s difference from classical poetry, on several occasions Su Shi conversely stressed that song lyric *was* classical poetry.⁵ It was not, but neither was it the song lyric that had existed before Su Shi came on the scene.

Su Shi’s Presence

It is impossible to overstate Su Shi’s commanding presence in the Song cultural world, both in his own day and for many decades to come. In

3. I use the term “song lyric proper” to render the Chinese term *bense* 本色 (“the original color”), used by Southern Song and later critics to refer to those qualities of the genre seemingly uncontaminated by classical poetry (or the low-register vernacular).

4. Dating truly datable poems and lyrics is useful, but *biannian* collections can be an essentially corrupting force in scholarship. The scholarly impulse to produce ever enlarged *biannian* collections encourages scholars to argue for more and more dates for texts that essentially cannot be dated.

5. Zou and Wang, 2.

writing song lyric among his immediate followers, only Chao Buzhi (1053–1110) sometimes followed the master's lead, and he often presents us with minatory examples of the peril of being an epigone of Su Shi. Su Shi created a community of younger writers—including but not limited to the famous “four protégés of Su Shi” (蘇門四學士). In song lyric as in other forms, these younger writers communicated with each other, read each other's works, and promoted each other. Until we reach a new generation coming of age at the beginning of the twelfth century, there were only a few lyricists with a surviving song lyric collection of a certain magnitude who were not in some way linked to that group. The major exception is Zhou Bangyan—and his lyric collection had to be pieced together in the last quarter of the twelfth century.

When we refer to “surviving song lyric collections,” we should stress the word “surviving” and entertain the possibility that the attention they received was due to their connection to this culturally powerful (and often politically unfortunate) group, which, like a set of iron rings, hung on the magnetism of Su Shi's name.

It seems to have been an age of claims, both intentional and unintentional, for a centralized authority, bolstered by followers whose own claims of authority derived from centralized authority. We see this in Daoxue; we see this in Wang Anshi and his followers, and in the desperate imperial system that hoped to regain its stability through Wang Anshi's vision. Probably no one wanted such authority less than Su Shi—even though his judgments were often fiercely authoritative—but authority was granted to him. Zhu Xi succeeded in establishing such authority in Daoxue in the Southern Song—though not uncontested—but of the earlier ventures in establishing authority, Su Shi's was arguably the most successful.

Even if we credit the authorship of lyrics before Su Shi, the “when, where, and why” of their composition is usually unknown, and our attempts to tease out answers to those questions are often fanciful. But if we know too little about the circumstances of composition of those earlier lyrics, then in the case of Su Shi we have far too much information. During his lifetime and for the rest of the Song, Su Shi was the object of literati interest at a level that was unprecedented in Chinese culture and probably unmatched subsequently. He documented his

own life in staggering detail, but that was not enough. Anecdotes on the "real circumstances" of inadequately documented song lyrics appeared in impressive numbers, as did new Su Shi lyrics. When publishing the works of a famous person, there was an obvious advantage in publishing an edition that included lyrics not seen in previous editions. In modern editions the careful reader of textual notes, too often overlooked, should note when a lyric first appears that is not included in the earliest editions.

Su Shi did compose prefaces and occasional subtitles for many of his lyrics. This material is generally reliable, especially with the longer prefaces (though the variations in the two prefaces on the Panpan lyric give different stories of some significance). The relation between anecdotes on the compositional occasion of a lyric and subtitling can be problematic. There are three distinct traditions for Su Shi's lyrics: 1) Zeng Zao's edition, preface 1151, preserved in Wu Ne's collection; 2) an extant 1320 imprint, the Yuan edition; and 3) Fu Gan's 傅幹 edition with annotation from the Shaoxing reign (1131–62), the earliest surviving copy being a Ming manuscript copy. Zeng Zao's edition in particular often follows songbook practice in giving the subtitle as short and general (for example, "River scene" 江景); and when a longer occasional title appears in the Yuan edition and the Fu Gan edition, we assume that Zeng Zao's edition—either originally or in some generation—simply omitted the occasional details. But we are not sure. When all three traditions do not have the longer occasional title, taken from some later edition, and this title in some way corresponds to Southern Song anecdotes about the circumstances of a certain lyric's composition, then we have to be suspicious about who added it and when.

Among the Northern Song lyricists a single early source breeds unwarranted confidence. Whenever we have multiple early sources, as we saw with Ouyang Xiu, we usually encounter problems.

Su Shi and Liu Yong

Liu Yong and Ouyang Xiu are the only predecessors in song lyric about whom Su Shi speaks. Ouyang Xiu had been his patron and friend, and

Su's comments are not so much about the art of song lyric as nostalgic memories of the person. Scholars generally take Su Shi's comments as expressing disapproval of Liu Yong, but Su Shi's disapproval of a predecessor is often a mark of his interest, though it carries the implication that he is not like his prominent predecessor. The earliest text that aggressively asserts "brashness" and has a coded "male" voice was composed in Mizhou in 1075, to "Jiangchengzi" 江城子 ("Lyric on Hunting"):⁶

老夫聊發少年狂。左牽黃。右擎蒼。
錦帽貂裘，千騎卷平岡。為報傾城隨太守，親射虎，看孫郎。
酒酣胸膽尚開張。鬢微霜。又何妨。
持節雲中，何日遣馮唐。會挽雕弓如滿月，西北望，射天狼。

For a while this old fellow broke into
the wildness of youth.
On my left I lead a yellow dog.
On my right, a gray hawk on the arm.
Brocade cap and sable furs,
a thousand riders roll over the level hill.
To repay the whole city
for following their governor,
they can watch a Sun Quan
shoot a tiger himself.⁷
Tipsy from drink, my sense of daring
still expanded.
The hair at my temples was a little frosty.
But what did that matter?
When will they dispatch this Feng Tang
to take the seal of authority to Yunzhong?⁸

6. Tang Guizhang 1999, 385; Zou and Wang, 146. There has been debate about whether this was composed in Xuzhou in 1078 or in Mizhou in 1075. The dating of the letter that refers to the lyric is crucial and decides the case for Mizhou. See Zou and Wang, 147.

7. Sun Quan was the founder of the kingdom of Wu, one of the Three Kingdoms. Personally killing a tiger was one of his exploits.

8. Yunzhong was the northern commandery that was, in the Han and earlier, the site of warfare with the non-Chinese peoples of the north. Wei Shang, the governor, had successfully defended it against incursion, but he was stripped of his status because of a discrepancy between the number of dead reported and the number of heads. Feng Tang remonstrated on his behalf, and Han Wendi sent him to restore Wei Shang and made Feng Tang himself to be a commanding general.

I will surely bend the carved bow
to the shape of the full moon,
and gazing northwest,
shoot the Heaven Wolf.⁹

This is fairly mild stuff, but it was unheard of in the earlier song lyric tradition. Associated with the lyric is a letter to Xianyu Shen 鲜于侁:

Recently I have really been writing minor lyrics; and though they don't have the manner (*fengwei* 風味) of Liu Yong, they are still all of their own kind (*yi zishi yijia* 亦自是一家). Ha! A few days ago I was hunting beyond the outskirts of the city and bagged quite a haul. I composed a lyric, and would have bold fellows from the east sing it, palms face down and stomping their feet, with the rhythm kept by flutes and drums—that would be quite a scene. Here's a copy for a laugh.

"Jiangchengzi" is a *zhongdiao* 中調, a middle-length lyric with far more affinities to *xiaoling* than to the long *manci*. If Su Shi were seeking a contrast to more "feminine" lyrics, he might have thought of his friend Zhang Xian, or his patron Ouyang Xiu, or his patron's patron Yan Shu—or, if he wanted to avoid sounding critical of those with whom he had social ties, Feng Yansi. But he chose Liu Yong to represent the "feminine" ethos of song lyric, sung by young girls to stringed instruments, rather than by strapping men to the "virile" music of flute and drum.¹⁰ One can envision Su Shi suddenly thinking to himself: "How could this ever be *sung* by a fifteen-year-old girl?!"

Perhaps the most telling moment in the letter is when he comments: "They are of their own kind." *Yijia* 一家, literally "one family," had by Su Shi's time come to refer to a distinct and recognizable authorial presence in writing. A distinct authorial presence is certainly not something one could associate with the earlier *xiaoling* lyricists, where lyrics often appeared in several collections—though it might be said of Liu Yong. More than anything else Su Shi wanted authorial presence.

9. A constellation associated with invaders.

10. See Egan 1994, 331–32. Liu Yong is also the target when Su disapproves of the "feminine" style in a lyric by his follower Qin Guan. See Egan 1994, 320–21.

The phrase *yijia* derives from Sima Qian's letter to Ren An, in the formulation *yijia zhi yan* 一家之言 ("the discourse of one family"), referring to the *Shiji* as the work begun by his father and completed by Sima Qian himself. As the phrase increasingly referred to a single authorial presence in writing, Sima Qian's usage came to be understood as his assertion of authorship. Although we may doubt that Li Qingzhao knew of Su Shi's letter to Xianyu Shen, she was clearly attempting to recapture Sima Qian's famous phrase for at least a figurative "family," rather than a single author in her famous characterization of song lyrics as "a different family altogether" (*bieshi yijia* 別是一家). What song lyrics are "different from" here are the great literati of classical poetry trying to write lyrics, a group including Su Shi.

It is possible that Su Shi had only "heard of" Liu Yong or heard a few of his songs; but given the various echoes of Liu Yong's lyrics in his work, I believe it is possible that he had a version of some collection of Liu's lyrics. And for someone learning to write *manzi* in the 1070s Liu Yong would have been the only significant predecessor. Unlike his own successors in the "brash" mode, for Su Shi a significant predecessor was someone from whom to differentiate himself.

Let us consider one of his earliest datable lyrics, to "Xingxiangzi" 行香子, about a trip down "Seven League Rapids" 過七里灘:¹¹

一葉舟輕。雙槳鴻驚。水天清、影湛波平。
魚翻藻鑒，鷺點煙汀。過沙溪急，霜溪冷，月溪明。
重重似畫，曲曲如屏。算當年、虛老嚴陵。
君臣一夢，今古虛名。但遠山長，雲山亂，曉山青。

A tiny boat light.
At the pair of oars swans startle to flight.
The water and heavens clear,
reflections show sharply, waves level.
A fish overturns a watergrass mirror,
egrets dot the misty shores.
We pass
sandy creeks running swiftly,
frosty creeks chill,
moonlit creeks bright.

11. Tang Guizhang 1999, 391; Zou and Wang, 24.

Every level is like a painting,
 every bend is like a folding screen.
 I reckon back then he grew old in vain at Yanling.
 Ruler and subject, a single dream,
 present and past, empty fame.
 Only
 distant mountains stretching long,
 cloudy mountains in disarray,
 morning mountains green.

One of the most characteristic features of *manci* in the hands of Liu Yong was the use of *lingzi* 領字, an initial verb that governs several objects. Su Shi converts the 4-3-3 of the stanza end into a *lingzi*, followed by three parallel lines, each with one shared word and the others marking a change of state.

Later readers and critics know Su Shi so well that they could make the judgment that this "sounds like" Su Shi. But when we look at earlier lyrics to the tune "Xing xiangzi," we find Zhang Xian, concluding a lyric to the same tune:¹²

奈心中事, 眼中淚, 意中人。

I can't do anything about
 what's going on in my heart,
 the tears in my eyes,
 the person on my mind.

Su Shi characteristically converts the material of the love lyric into something all his own, and uses it to articulate motion in space and time. Then we might recall Liu Yong's opening of "Yeban yue," also with a *lingzi* of "passage through":¹³

12. Tang Guizhang 1999, 103. We find essentially the same pattern in Song Qi's "Lang tao sha jin" (Tang Guizhang 1999, 148); see "Other Xiaoling Lyricists" in Chapter 3, "The Yuezhang ji and Liu Yong."

13. Tang Guizhang 1999, 44. See "Landscapes" in Chapter 3, "The Yuezhang ji and Liu Yong."

凍雲黯淡天氣，扁舟一葉，乘興離江渚。度萬壑千巖，越溪深處。

Frozen clouds, dark and gloomy weather,
a leaf of a tiny boat
going with my whim leaves the river isle.
Crossing past
thousands of ravines and cliffs
and deep-set spots on creeks in Yue.

Let me suggest that while Zhang Xian's lyric was the formal model, Liu Yong's exhilarating journey is the underlying text for Su's journey, using a *lingzi* to articulate motion. The most striking difference is that Su Shi gets rid of the final part, Liu Yong's obligatory closing that declares regret for going on travels and longing for a woman in the capital. Ronald Egan titles his chapter on Su Shi's song lyrics "Washing Away the Silks and Perfume," citing Hu Yin's comment.¹⁴ If we think of Liu Yong's travel lyrics, one admittedly small part of Su Shi's radical transformation of song lyric was taking a Liu Yong travel lyric and "washing away" the final section.

Su Shi had a sharp instinct for how to snatch a good moment from a predecessor and reuse it. Su borrows and betters Liu Yong's landscape description, as he hears from Zhang Xian how to conclude a stanza in the tune "Xing xiangzi."

In China, landscape has always been in danger of falling into a map of sites. Su Shi passes one such site, Yanling, the spot where in the first century Yan Guang 嚴光 fished as a recluse. Yan Guang had been a school friend of Liu Xiu, later to become the restorer of the Han dynasty as Guangwudi. When Liu Xiu took the throne, Yan Guang changed his name and went into hiding. Guangwudi sought him out, brought him to court (after many refusals), treated him with the greatest respect, and at last had to let him go back to farm.

Su Shi sees landscape until he passes Yanling, when the landscape suddenly becomes a "site," on which Su must comment. The problem with such "sites" is that they often have no historical basis, as was the case with Su Shi's "Red Cliff."

14. Egan 1994, 315.

Su Shi's lyric to "Niannu jiao" 念奴嬌, "Meditation on the Past at Red Cliff," of 1082, is certainly one of the most famous lyrics in the language.¹⁵

大江東去，浪淘盡、千古風流人物。
故壘西邊，人道是、三國周郎赤壁。
亂石穿空，驚濤拍岸，卷起千堆雪。
江山如畫，一時多少豪傑。
遙想公瑾當年，小喬初嫁了，雄姿英發。
羽扇綸巾，談笑間、檣櫓灰飛煙滅。
故國神游，多情應笑我，早生華髮。
人生如夢，一尊還酹江月。

Eastward goes the great river,
its waves have swept away
the gallant men of all time.
And they say
that west of the ancient castle here
is that Red Cliff
of Zhou Yu and the Three Kingdoms.
A rocky tangle pierces sky,
leaping waves smash the shore,
surging snow in a thousand drifts.
Like a painting, these rivers and hills
where once so many bold men were.
I envision Zhou Yu back then,
just wedded to the younger Qiao,
his manly manner striking.
With black turban and feather fan
laughing in conversation
as embers flew from mast and prow
and the smoke was sinking away.
The spirit roams that long-ago land—
you will laugh at this sentimental me,
hair streaked with white before my time.
Yet this human world is like a dream
and I pour out my cup as offering
into the river's moonbeams.

15. Tang Guizhang 1999, 363; Zou and Wang, 398.

Looking for a precedent for this lyric, scholars often mention Wang Anshi's meditation on the past at Jinling, to "Guizhi xiang" 桂枝香. But the more obvious precedent is Liu Yong's, to "Shuangshengzi" 雙聲子.¹⁶

晚天蕭索，斷蓬蹤跡，乘興蘭棹東遊。
 三吳風景，姑蘇臺榭，牢落暮靄初收。
 夫差舊國，香徑沒、徒有荒丘。
 繁華處，悄無睹，惟聞麋鹿呦呦。
 想當年、空運籌決戰，圖王取霸無休。
 江山如畫，雲濤煙浪，翻輸范蠡扁舟。
 驗前經舊史，嗟漫載、當日風流。
 斜陽暮草茫茫，盡成萬古遺愁。

Evening skies cold and dreary,
 tracks of a dandelion puff broken loose,
 following his impulse, magnolia oars roam eastward.
 The scenery of all Wu,
 terraces and kiosks of Gusu,
 in vast stillness the twilight haze first recedes.
 The old kingdom of Fucha,¹⁷
 his paths of fragrance sunken away,
 nothing but an overgrown mound.
 A site of splendor and glory,
 silent now, nothing to see,
 I hear only the belling of the musk deer.
 I envision back then
 how in vain he laid plans for decisive battle,
 plotting endlessly to be king and overlord.
 Like a painting, these rivers and hills,
 cloudy billows and misty waves,
 instead were lost to Fan Li's little boat.
 Examining old classics and histories,
 I sigh how in vain they record
 the gallantry of those times.
 Twilight plants in the setting sun stretch far and wide,
 all become a sadness that remains forever.

16. Tang Guizhang 1999, 35; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 109.

17. Also pronounced Fuchai.

This is not an accidental resemblance. If one thinks of instances in Chinese history when a ruler was suddenly and decisively defeated just when on the very brink of becoming "overlord," the first two cases to come to mind would be Fucha's (King of Wu's) suddenly learning at the ceremony to declare him overlord that the Kingdom of Yue had invaded and taken his capital, and Cao Cao's spectacular reversal in the naval battle at Red Cliff. In addition we have a shared line—admittedly a cliché—and a shared phrase in the same location in the stanza transition. The clichéd line of the landscape being like a painting is linked to waves: in Liu Yong misty waves carrying off Fan Li, the architect of Wu's destruction; in Su Shi more violent waves, with Zhou Yu, the instrument of Cao Cao's ruin, appearing later.

In no way is this meant to detract from the originality of Su Shi's famous lyric. Quite the opposite—Su Shi neither needed nor accepted influence or "inspiration"; he was, however, quite willing to borrow the pieces of earlier texts that served his purposes. The careful reader of Su Shi beside Liu Yong will note how often he takes and transforms pieces of Liu Yong's, but he usually hides his traces. There is no hiding of traces here, as if to say: "After my lyric, how can anyone even think of Liu Yong's lyric?" Hardly anyone did.

Song Lyric and Classical Poetry

Su Shi was often charged with "treating song lyric as classical poetry" (*yi shi wei ci* 以詩為詞).¹⁸ The hunting lyric to "Jiangchengzi" discussed above is an excellent opportunity to revisit that cliché. The lyric takes up a topic that had traditionally belonged to classical poetry and that was outside the thematic range of song lyric. There is no doubt that this and other song lyrics by Su Shi borrow diction and a range of allusion from classical poetry. But making use of the resources of classical poetry is very different from writing a classical poem in the mere form of song

18. This idea is credited to Chen Shidao in *Houshan shihua* 後山詩話. Doubts about the authenticity of this work have been raised since the Southern Song, and the best we can say is that at least some of the entries were added later.

lyric (if that were possible), because content can be profoundly changed by form.

Su Shi composed a classical poem on the same occasion as the lyric to “Jiangchengzi,” titled “A Small Hunt on Returning From a Sacrifice at Chang Mountain” 祭常山回小獵.¹⁹

青蓋前頭點皂旗，黃茅岡下出長圍。
弄風驕馬跑空立，趁兔蒼鷹掠地飛。
回望白雲生翠巘，歸來紅葉滿征衣。
聖明若用西涼簿，白羽猶能效一揮。

In front of the blue carriage awnings
the dots of black flags,
below a hill of yellow grasses
a vast encirclement comes forth.
Enjoying the wind, mettlesome horses
stand kicking at the air,
in pursuit of a hare the gray falcon
flies hugging the ground.
Looking around, white clouds
form in blue-green precipices,
going home, red leaves
fill our traveling clothes.
If our wise ruler would employ
the clerk of Western Liang,²⁰
a white feathered fan would still be able
to win out in a single wave.

In many of his classical poems Su Shi places himself center stage, but here we have a beautiful staging of an encirclement hunt, with the distant riders driving all the animals into bow-range of Governor Su and other members of his entourage. In the second couplet we begin with the horses pawing at the ground, eager for the chase, a tense stasis resolved in the motion of the falcon going off after the hare. By the third couplet the hunt is over, with a scene of clouds echoing the closing of Wang Wei’s “Watching the Hunt” 觀獵, a tranquility after violence

19. Wang Wengao 王文誥, *Su Shi shiji* 蘇軾詩集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), 647.

20. Xie Ai 謝艾 (d. 354), a scholar turned general.

carried through by the red autumn leaves ("leaves" also being a figurative measure for puffs of cloud). The conclusion suggests that he has the capacity to be one of those famous literati-turned-generals and achieve victory on the Song's troubled frontiers—the mention of Western Liang suggests the northwest, which in the Song would be the Kingdom of Xixia, then the Song's most dangerous enemy.

Though the conclusion is essentially the same, it should be clear the degree to which the song lyric is not just a classical poem in long and short lines. Su Shi can be playfully ironic in his classical poems, but the tongue-in-cheek theatricality of the song lyric is not the same kind of "poetry" (in the large sense). In the song lyric he also places himself at center stage, with all Mizhou turned out to watch him in the role of Sun Quan shooting the tiger. If that were not enough, he then assumes the role of Feng Tang, a Han court official turned general; and again fixing his eyes northwest (Xixia) he finally becomes nothing less than the sun god Dongjun 東君, who in the "Nine Songs" of the *Chuci* shoots the asterism Heaven Wolf as it sets at the close of the day.

The hyperbole of his military prowess in a provincial hunt is everywhere undercut with irony: he is the old man gone temporarily out of control (youth's "wildness" or "madness"); he has been drinking too much; he's too old for this sort of thing—affirmed by saying it didn't matter. In short, we have a performance, with the lyricist simultaneously absorbed in it and knowing better. This is song lyric's role-playing. It is not all that far a leap to Yan Jidao's singers, where the issue of the sincerity of passion and performance is often central.

There is more to this. The classical poem, evidently written out and hung on one of the prefectural chambers, was used (with many other poems) in the initial charges against Su Shi at his famous "poetry trial," where he was accused of *lèse majesté*, punishable by death. Su Shi was charged with suggesting in the poem that the emperor had failed to recognize his military talents. As one of the sillier charges against Su Shi this one was dismissed from the final indictment. Ronald Egan astutely suggests that after his trial and exile to Huangzhou, Su Shi's production of classical poetry decreased and the number of song lyrics increased because song lyric simply didn't matter politically—it was a

safe form.²¹ The lyric to “Jiangchengzi” was far more incendiary in some ways than the mild closing of the classical poem, but it simply could not be taken seriously. One reason often given for this was the lower status of song lyric, which was “below the horizon” of the Censorate readers seeking evidence to convict Su. Here, however, we see some deeper reasons why song lyric was not taken seriously: it was composed by an admittedly half-drunk, crazy old man. The lyric theatrically underscores the deniability of its claims. One was not held politically accountable for what was said in song lyric not just because of the status of the genre *per se*, but because it represented “feelings” or the “mood of the moment,” rather than opinions or “aims” (*zhi* 志).

Getting into Mancì

Su Shi wrote both *xiaoling* and *manci* throughout his career as a lyricist, but from what can be credibly dated, his use of *xiaoling* came first. Some were for parties or *jeux d'esprit* on occasions, but he also used the form for occasions other than social gatherings. We find the same in Liu Yong and the *xiaoling* writers, but we see how the lyric could have returned to social performance. Such a destination seems unlikely in many of Su's lyrics. The following lyric to “Zui luopo” 醉落魄 is from 1074, written on a journey undertaken while he was serving in Hangzhou; the occasional title is “Leaving Jingkou” 離京口.²² It is one of the most famous of his early lyrics and one that shows the traces of the larger *xiaoling* world.

輕雲微月。二更酒醒船初發。孤城回望蒼煙合。
公子佳人，不記歸時節。
巾偏扇墜膝床滑。覺來幽夢無人說。此生飄蕩何時歇。
家在西南，長作東南別。

Light clouds, faint moonlight.
In the second watch I sobered up,
the boat was just setting out.

21. Egan 1994, 325–26.

22. Tang Guizhang 1999, 400.

I turned to gaze at the solitary city,
 blue-gray mist merged over it.
 Fine gentlemen and fair women—
 I don't recall when I left.
 Headband askew, fan fallen,
 the rattan couch slippery.
 I woke up from a hidden dream
 with no one to tell it to.
 This life of being tossed along,
 when will it ever end?
 My home is in the southwest,
 and I am always leaving for farther southeast.

The reader of Yan Jidao will immediately think of Yan Jidao drunk, leaving the beloved, and not recalling the details of the evening when he sobered up. Su Shi simply has to catch his boat, and instead of the fraught evening of separation from the beloved, here we simply have a banquet with "fine gentlemen and fair women." The touch of genius that transforms the drunken parting is the backward gaze toward the walls of Jingkou as they are gradually covered over by the mist, a visual erasure of the place that has been lost to memory.

The second stanza has him waking from sleep in disarray—we might think of Yan Jidao's clothes stained with spilled ale. He is alone again, "fine gentlemen and fair women" gone, and there is no one with whom he can share his dream. As the boat goes, so his life goes, moving farther on, with the only stable place being his home in Sichuan—perhaps returned to in dream—and his motion thus defined as going farther and farther away. The lyric wisely limits the feeling of being "tossed along" (*piaodang* 飄蕩) to the geographical vector, but of course he grows more distant in aging, as well as in passing through too many places like Jingkou, banqueting, only to have them eventually erased from his memory.

This lyric bears Su Shi's figurative "signature." As with his use of Liu Yong in the Red Cliff lyric, he plunders the song lyric tradition for what is useful but so completely subsumes it into his own idiom that the source is virtually invisible.²³

23. We might think of Huang Tingjian, ever in awe of Su's genius, as the poet who wanted

Although there are some *manci* that scholars have tried to date to an earlier period, we can credibly date *manci* composition to a bit later, in 1074, when Su Shi set out to take up his post as governor of Mizhou. We don't know if this was the earliest long *manci* Su Shi wrote, but it represents the profound difference of *manci* from *xiaoling*. The tune is to "Qin yuan chun" 沁園春, and the occasional title is "Traveling early on horseback as I set off for Mizhou, sent to Ziyou [Su Che]" 赴密州早行馬上寄子由.²⁴

Before we look at the lyric, there are some things to consider. "Qin yuan chun" is a metrically complicated lyric. The first time we find it is in Zhang Xian, and we must assume that Su Shi learned it from Zhang Xian—or remembered Zhang's unmemorable lyrics to that tune.²⁵ Perhaps it was a tune just becoming "popular." The irregularity of *xiaoling* is like the tune to "The Bridge Over the River Kwai"; it is easy and everyone knows it. The irregularity of "Qin yuan chun" is more like a madrigal. If you are familiar with it, the tune may haunt you, but you can't ask the local barmaid to sing new lyrics to the tune. As a mercy I will spare my readers a translation of Zhang Xian's version. Only the music could have caught Su Shi's attention—and that is long lost. But we have to imagine him "on horseback" in the early morning hours, setting a new lyric to such a tune.

It was probably not a tune that Su Che could have called a local singer to perform to fully appreciate his brother's message—it may not even have been a tune he knew. We must qualify this supposition—it may well have been the "hottest" tune of 1074—but our only known precedent is Zhang Xian's version. The point is that this seems to be a gesture to music rather than one meant for music. It is purely a verse epistle, usually done in classical poetry. We can only guess why Su Shi decided to compose for his brother in this form—on horseback.

孤館燈青，野店雞號，旅枕夢殘。
漸月華收練，晨霜耿耿，雲山攜錦，朝露漙漙。

to be able to do this too. But in Huang past texts were always visible, and he turned the artful use of past texts into the hallmark of his poetics.

24. Tang Guizhang 1999, 363–64; Zou and Wang 131.

25. Wu and Shen, 59.

世路無窮，勞生有限，似此區區長鮮歡。

微吟罷，憑征鞍無語，往事千端。

當時共客長安。似二陸初來俱少年。

有筆頭千字，胸中萬卷，致君堯舜，此事何難。

用舍由時，行藏在我，袖手何妨閑處看。

身長健，但優遊卒歲，且門尊前。

In the lonely lodge the lamp-fire was blue,
the rooster crowed in the rustic inn,
on the traveler's pillow a dream faded.

Gradually

the white satin of moonglow withdrew,
the morning frost was sparkling,
cloudy mountains spread their brocade,
dawn's dew full on the plants.

The roads of this world are endless,
the burden of life has its limits,

wearing myself out rushing about like this always has few pleasures.

My soft chanting ceases,

I rest on my journeying saddle not speaking,
a thousand instances of what happened before.

Back then we were both sojourners in Chang'an,
Like the two Lu brothers when we first came,
both young men.

There were a thousand words on the tips of our brushes,
ten thousand volumes we knew by heart,
and to make our ruler a Yao or Shun
didn't seem much of a problem.

To be employed or dismissed is tied to the times,
but to serve or retire depends on oneself,
so what's to stop us from hiding hands in our sleeves
and watching from a place of ease?

Our bodies always healthy,
just being relaxed to the end of our days,
finding sport for the while in our cups.

It is hard to imagine this being sung. Far more than *xiaoling*, it is filled with images and phrases from older poetry and references to specific places and people, like the "Lu brothers," Lu Ji and Lu Yun, going from

their native Wu to the capital in Luoyang. Bianjing poetically becomes Chang'an. There is nothing particularly difficult about these, but they were not part of the usual repertoire of song lyric diction.

If we then wonder why he composed this as a *manci*, we might think of the Zhang Xian precedent in writing to this tune, where at the end Zhang imagines the high official to whom the lyric is dedicated eventually retiring. But Su Shi is actually far closer to the normative travel *manci* of Liu Yong, beginning with a beautiful setting of the scene, then traveling, and in the stanza transition shifting to memories of the beloved in the capital and a wish to return to her. Su Shi simply replaces the beloved with his brother, and directs the pleasures of return to contemplative ease rather than to parties and the company of the beloved.

Absent Women

Women had been at the very center of earlier song lyric, not only thematically as beloved and themselves loving, but also in the practice of song. Su Shi's collected lyrics contain more than a few pieces to singers and about singers. They do not sound like the old-fashioned *xiaoling*, but they make use of some of the clichés. Very few of these are anthologized or noted by critics—except when they go so far that their authenticity is doubted. One might be tempted to conclude that such songs are overlooked because of Su Shi's image as the representative of the "masculine" mode in song lyric; but it would be hard to defend the importance of these lyrics in Su Shi's corpus on any grounds other than Su's facility and wit.

If women are banished from "serious" lyrics, like the above *manci* to Su Che, they return in some of his most memorable and best works—but when they return, they are usually either long dead, far away, or purely fanciful figuration. While Su Shi was far from being free of sentimentality, he often resisted it; and he seems to have been unable to endure it in song lyric's discourse of love and loss.

Perhaps his most moving lyric is to "Jiangchengzi," recording a dream of his dead wife, dated 1075 (乙卯正月二十日夜記夢).²⁶

26. Tang Guizhang 1999, 387, under tune title "Jiangshenzi" 江神子; Zou and Wang, 141.

十年生死兩茫茫。不思量。自難忘。千里孤墳，無處話淒涼。
縱使相逢應不識，塵滿面，鬢如霜。
夜來幽夢忽還鄉。小軒窗。正梳妝。相顧無言，惟有淚千行。
料得年年斷腸處，明月夜，短松岡。

Ten years, one alive and one dead,
each lost to the other in the vastness.
I don't brood on it.
It's just hard to forget.
A lone tomb a thousand leagues away,
no way to tell of the dismal loneliness.
Even if we were to meet,
I'm sure she wouldn't know me,
dust filling my face,
the hair at my temples like frost.
Last night, lost in dream,
I suddenly went back home.
At the window to her chamber
she was just then combing her hair.
We looked at each other saying nothing,
there were only a thousand lines of tears.
I think that the most heartbreaking place over the years,
on a night of bright moonlight,
is that hill with its short pines.

Su Shi seems to be trying to convey emotion without being sentimental—and that is not easy. We should note that he does not indicate whom he dreams of in the occasional title and that the first stanza could be about a deceased male friend or family member. But perhaps the most peculiar move is to assure his readers: "I don't brood on it." The memories come back involuntarily. He does actually say that *he* has "no way to tell of the dismal loneliness"—given the placement, the subject could be the spirit of his wife. The final act of distancing is to say that she wouldn't recognize the Su Shi of today. But the more he tries to assert distance, the more persuasively he conveys a depth of feeling.

As Liu Yong's travel *manci* and Su Shi's "Qin yuan chun" move to retrospect in the stanza transition, here the poet returns home to a scene from the past. It is a strange scene, as he is apparently looking at

his wife through the window to her chamber—and we have to remember that this is a premodern Chinese window, probably latticework. The ambiguity of poetic Chinese again serves Su Shi's purposes. I have translated *xianggu* 相顧 in the sentimental way, but *xiang* 相 just as often marks a direct object, as it means "mutually" ("each other"). Thus *xianggu* could as easily mean "I looked at her," or "she looked around at me." In short, the tears might be hers. The image of his dead wife at her toilette fades into the moonlit tomb in Meizhou, marked by the pines planted there.

Lamenting the death of a wife and dreaming of dead family members were then topics as proper to classical poetry as they were improper to song lyric. Not only was this a topic incongruous for performance, but it simply could *not* be performed on the social occasions when song lyric was used. We cannot know why Su Shi chose the form, but perhaps, with the conventions of song lyric, it seemed the only way to work through feeling and sentimentality. Once Su Shi did it, however, the song lyric "lament for a woman" (*daowang* 悼亡), usually one's wife, came to be used in his circle.

Here we might turn to another woman encountered in a dream in the equally famous lyric, composed to "Yong yu le" 永遇樂, that has two versions of what was supposed to be Su Shi's appended note: either "I spent the night in Swallow House, dreamed of Panpan, and thereupon wrote this lyric" (夜宿燕子樓, 夢盼盼, 因作此詞), or "In Xuzhou I woke up from a dream and wrote this on climbing to the second storey of Swallow House to the north" (徐州夢覺, 北登燕子樓作).²⁷

Panpan had been the favorite concubine of Zhang Yin 張愔, the Tang military governor of Xuzhou, son and successor of the more famous Zhang Jianfeng 張建封 (who was often mistaken for Panpan's patron). On Zhang Yin's death Panpan refused to "remarry" and took up residence in a small building known as Swallow House in Zhang Yin's compound. We know this because of Bai Juyi's preface to three quatrains he wrote on Swallow House in 815, in response to three quatrains by a friend, Zhang Zhongsu 張仲素, who had served on the staff of the

27. Tang Guizhang, 1999, 389; Zou and Wang, 247.

Wuning Army headquartered in Xuzhou.²⁸ These Tang quatrains celebrate Panpan's enduring love for Zhang Yin and pity her isolation.

Enter Su Shi, the Song governor of Xuzhou as Zhang Yin had been its Tang governor.

明月如霜，好風如水，清景無限。
 曲港跳魚，圓荷瀉露，寂寞無人見。
 欸如三鼓，鏗然一葉，黯黯夢雲驚斷。
 夜茫茫，重尋無處，覺來小園行遍。
 天涯倦客，山中歸路，望斷故園心眼。
 燕子樓空，佳人何在，空鎖樓中燕。
 古今如夢，何曾夢覺，但有舊歡新怨。
 異時對，黃樓夜景，為余浩歎。

The bright moon is like frost,
 a fine breeze, like water,
 the clear scene boundless.
 In the bending bay a fish jumps,
 the round lotus pad spills dew,
 in the silence there is no one to be seen.
 The boom of the midnight watch-drum,
 the clattering of a single leaf,
 In the blackness my dream of clouds broke off with a start.
 The night was vast,
 no way to find it again,
 I woke up and walked all through the little garden.
 Weary wayfarer at heaven's edge,
 my road home is in the mountains,
 the mind's eye gazes as far as it can toward my garden there.
 Swallow House is empty,
 where now is that beauty?—
 it locks in nothing more than swallows.
 Past and present are like a dream,
 and when will we ever wake from that dream?—
 nothing more than past pleasures and new heartaches.
 In some other times facing
 the night scene of Yellow House,
 there will be deep sighs for me.

28. QTs 22597–99.

Try as we may, it is hard to dispel the strangeness of this lyric and particularly of its conclusion.

Let us begin by being practical. It is possible, but unlikely, that a building in the Zhang compound in the first decades of the ninth century was still standing in 1078—a great deal of violent history had intervened. It is possible that the Song governor's compound was the old compound of the Zhangs in the Mid-Tang. What seems more likely is that the Song governor's compound "should have been" identified with the Zhang compound and that such a compound "should have" a Swallow House, perhaps because of local lore, but certainly because of the widespread knowledge and fame of Bai Juyi.

We should quote Bai Juyi's first quatrain:

滿窗明月滿簾霜，被冷燈殘拂臥床。
燕子樓中霜月夜，秋來只為一人長。

Filling the window the bright moon,
filling the curtains, frost,
covers cold, lamp going out,
she brushes smooth her bed.
In Swallow House
a night of moonlight and frost,
when autumn comes, grows long
for only one person.

Bai Juyi's autumn scene is only speculative. Su Shi wants to reference it, but unfortunately the season is not autumn. Thus we have our opening: "The bright moon is like frost." The conventional erotic scene of the woman staying awake alone, longing for an absent beloved, is described from a speculative distance, and is combined with admiration for her resolve not to remarry.

Our two versions of an "original" authorial note have Su Shi sleeping in different places. In the second version above he is apparently sleeping in his own quarters, waking from an erotic dream ("dream of clouds"), getting up at midnight to walk around the compound, and going upstairs in Swallow House (presumably to Panpan's bedroom, since Bai Juyi informs us that it was a "small house"). The first version

cited has him actually sleeping in Swallow House, as if actively seeking a connection with Panpan.

The first two rhyme periods set a ground. We can rationalize it by saying this is what he sees and hears after he awakens, but in sequence this is the scene before he awakens, filled with a silence interrupted only by the splash of an unseen fish and the lotus pad that bends in response to shed its burden of accumulated dew. The beautiful night scene takes on different associations when we read of his "dream of clouds." Into the silence now comes the beating of the third watch drum (at roughly midnight), followed by the rustling of a single leaf, a sound of such different magnitude that it marks attentive listening in perfect silence.²⁹ Again the sequencing suggests that the sound of the leaf wakes him as much as the watch drum. His erotic dream interrupted, he rises and goes out alone into the garden of the official residence, as if to catch the dream, but realizes it is gone.

As so often, Su Shi's sense of isolation reminds him of his loss of freedom, his posting from place to place and the fact that he cannot go home. At this point Swallow House appears in the lyric, with Panpan gone like the dream, leaving only the eponymous swallows. The erotic "dream of clouds" becomes "life as a dream," or history as a dream, characterized always as the loss of pleasure, "nothing more than past pleasures and new heartaches."

As he contemplates the empty Swallow House, Su Shi replaces Panpan's absence with his own absence in the speculative future, and with another building whose emptiness is necessary to experience absence. This is Yellow House (or Yellow Tower), constructed by Su Shi himself to commemorate his saving the city from a major flood. A strange turn and substitution, it is similar to a move he makes elsewhere, where he shifts from being the subject to the object, from "missing someone" to "being missed."³⁰ There is a difference between simply being gone and being somewhere as an absence; Panpan becomes an absence experienced through a building (and a set of poems), and the poet thinks of Yellow House as a similar trace that will make him an

29. Cf. Han Yu, "Autumn Thoughts" 秋懷 VIII. Qian Zhonglian, *Han Changli shi xinian jishi* 韓昌黎詩集年集釋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984), 554.

30. See "Shui long yin," Tang Guizhang, 1999, 358; Zou and Wang, 349.

absence as well.³¹ Su Shi's larger project was to write himself into sites wherever he went. He was remarkably successful.

Perhaps Su Shi even knew that this Swallow House was not the original Swallow House, but was a site reconstructed to provide a tangible grounding for the story and Bai Juyi's poems.

Su Shi often claimed to be *duoqing* 多情 ("of much feeling"), perhaps best translated as "susceptible to strong feeling," contextually sometimes meaning "sentimental" and sometimes "passionate." This was the term he used for himself in "Meditation on the Past at Red Cliff," where he represents that quality in himself as the object of laughter. In some ways he probably was *duoqing*, but it was a quality that he strenuously resisted by placing some barrier between himself and the object of his attention—often by a whimsical irony, and on at least one occasion by a physical wall, as in the following *xiaoling* to "Die lian hua":³²

花褪殘紅青杏小。燕子飛時，綠水人家繞。
枝上柳綿吹又少。天涯何處無芳草。
牆裏秋千牆外道。牆外行人，牆裏佳人笑。
笑漸不聞聲漸悄。多情卻被無情惱。

The flowers shed their remaining red,
green apricots are small.
It is the time when swallows are flying,
where green waters are surrounded by people's homes.
In the branches the willow floss
is blown even less.
All the way to the horizon what spot
lacks fragrant plants?
Inside the wall, a swing,
outside the wall, the road.
Outside the wall someone walking,
inside the wall a beautiful girl laughing.

31. Ron Egan 1994 (341) interprets the analogy as that of Panpan's loyalty and his own loyalty to state service, based on the long-standing analogy between a loyal wife and an officer of the empire. This is possible, but it seems to me that the issue is the creation of a palpable memory after one's death, through the mediation of a site.

32. Tang Guizhang 1999, 387; Zou and Wang, 753.

Her laughter is gradually not heard,
 the sounds gradually grow silent.
 But someone with much feeling has been
 agitated by someone who feels nothing.

Nao 惱, translated as “agitated,” is sometimes “bothered,” but the term is also used for the effects of desire, especially of a man on account of a woman. It is certainly not that this young woman is incapable of feeling—just that she has no idea of the effect of her laughter on the passerby. He can’t see her—he simply infers her beauty from the sound of her laughter. Su Shi, usually so willing to mark himself as the central presence in a lyric, is remarkably impersonal here. If he is a person “of much feeling,” the lyricist who writes the lyric positions himself at an amused distance from the whole situation.

For Su Shi this may have been the essential task of song lyric: to take the turbulence of the human heart and, rather than trying to repress its representation as the moralists did, to transfigure it with reflective distance and a smile. Other lyricists tried to capture that turbulence in words, and only rarely succeeded.

The tradition of song lyric was essentially a discursive counter-culture in the Song world of public values that were becoming increasingly restrictive in the second half of the eleventh century. Song lyric often celebrated love as the only important thing in life against many other claimants to what was centrally important. All the other claimants—including nascent Daoxue (“Neo-Confucianism”), social distinction, and devotion to solving the empire’s problems—made strong claims of different kinds. The discourse of love, like earlier eremitism, gained strength only by its resistance and refusal to consider society’s claims. Some played at this discourse; others, like He Zhu, seem to have lived it. Su Shi found himself outside everything: he could not accept Daoxue’s blindness to how human beings actually responded to the world, he did not simply want advancement, he couldn’t endure the failure of Wang Anshi’s faction to understand the human society of the empire that they wanted to make a centralized tool, and he simply could not reject everything in the conventional way of song lyric

because he did not believe that love between a man and a woman was the most important thing in life. Usually adored and sometimes hated, Su Shi played none of the standard social and discursive roles; he had an instinct for finding an interesting place to stand outside of conventional discursive positions.

In his lyrics we see him attracted to various women, but he is not Yan Jidao. He is perhaps at his best with women in a domestic setting. We do not see the concubine brought out to perform before friends; we see his concubine Zhaoyun in Huizhou, having stayed with him for many years and having followed him into his Guangdong exile in Huizhou. This is the woman in Su Shi's lyrics who is not "absent." But she was to die in Huizhou.

Zhaoyun was not like Yan Jidao's beloved, burned forever into his memory; she was a gift of grace in a sad life. He is the lay-Buddhist Vimalakirti; she is the *apsara*, the angel that scatters a rain of flowers in his bare chamber. The late lyric "Ti ren jiao" 殢人嬌 for Zhaoyun is a different kind of love lyric, and makes a very fine pair with the best of Yan Jidao.³³

白髮蒼顏，正是維摩境界。空方丈、散花何礙。
朱唇著點，更髻鬟生菜。這些個，千生萬生只在。
好事心腸，著人情態。閑窗下、斂雲凝黛。
明朝端午，待學紉蘭為佩。尋一首好詩，要書裙帶。

White-haired, darkening face,
quite the world of Vimalakirti.
In my bare space a few yards square
what's to prevent a scattering of flowers?
Red lips no bigger than a chopstick's end,
and with coils of hair that give off a vegetal sheen.
These things
would be as ever for thousands of lifetimes.
A disposition to do good,
her manner, fondly attached to me.
By the idle window
she gathers up her hair and fixes her brows.

33. Tang Guizhang 1999, 397-98; Zou and Wang, 759.

Tomorrow is Duanwu Festival,
 she's going to try to braid eupatorium to hang at her waist.³⁴
 She wants to get a good poem from me
 to write on the sash of her skirt.

This is Su Shi in a very different key from the brashness of some of his most famous lyrics. We have a pair of lyrics to "Huan xi sha" that seem to have been written for Zhaoyun. Apparently for Su the "poem" that Zhaoyun sought, a "classical poem" (*shi* 詩), was interchangeable with song lyrics.

Huangzhou

After his trial in the Censorate for slandering the emperor in his writings, Su Shi was exiled in 1080, at the age of forty-five, to an unsalaried post in Huangzhou. There he became Su Dongpo, and there he was to remain until 1084. Though the credibility of dating many lyrics can produce significantly different numbers, there is no doubt, as Egan observes, that his output of song lyrics increased in those years, and included many of his best lyrics.

Probably soon after arriving in Huangzhou he composed an enigmatic lyric to "Busuanzi" 卜算子:³⁵

缺月掛疏桐，漏斷人初靜。時見幽人獨往來，縹緲孤鴻影。
 驚起卻回頭，有恨無人省。揀盡寒枝不肯棲，楓落吳江冷。

The waning moon hangs in a sparse tung tree,
 the water clock breaks off, people begin to grow still.
 At times a secluded person can be seen going back and forth,
 the outline of a lone swan faint in the distance.

Startled up, it turns its head back,
 feeling unhappy that no one tries to understand.

34. This is what Qu Yuan did in his poem "Li Sao." Qu Yuan was celebrated on Duanwu, the fifth day of the fifth month.

35. Tang Guizhang 1999, 381; Zou and Wang, 275.

It has picked through all the cold branches
and is not willing to settle,
maples shed their leaves, Wu rivers cold.

Our source for dating this to Huangzhou is a note by Huang Tingjian, which is almost as good as a note by Su Shi himself. The poem begs for a figurative reading, which has contributed to its being one of the most commented on of Su Shi's lyrics. In the Song it was either 1) a figure for his daughter by his deceased wife, 2) for the daughter of a neighbor who died after refusing to marry anyone less learned than Su Shi, 3) for the daughter of one Director Wen in Huizhou, 4) a political satire on the times, or, later, 5) none of the above. If Su Shi brought the autobiographical mode fully into Song lyric, the virtual cult of Su Shi in the Song richly supplied anecdotal circumstances for lyrics where the occasion was not fully specified by Su himself.

Later readings tend to take the lyric as Su Shi writing about his own situation, which at this particular juncture in his life inevitably had political overtones. His public career seemed ruined, he had just been on trial for his crimes against the emperor, and he had no control over where he was going to be sent to live, impoverished, for the term of his sentence. The presence of the lyric among Su Shi's Huangzhou works tends to confirm Ronald Egan's suggestion that song lyric was "under the radar" of the current political establishment—for it clearly invited reading as a protest against his unjust treatment.

The Huangzhou lyrics include many of his most famous, including the following to "Lin jiang xian":³⁶

夜飲東坡醒復醉，歸來仿佛三更。
家童鼻息已雷鳴。敲門都不應，倚杖聽江聲。
長恨此身非我有，何時忘卻營營。
夜闌風靜縠紋平。小舟從此逝，江海寄餘生。

I was drinking by night on East Slope,
sobering, I got drunk again,

36. Tang Guizhang 1999, 369; Zou and Wang 467.

when I went home it was roughly the third watch.
 The servant boy's snoring
 was already thunderous.
 I knocked at the gate, but there was no answer at all,
 leaning on my staff I listened to the sound of the river.
 I always resent how this body of mine
 doesn't belong to me,
 when can I forget this constant travail?
 Toward night's end the wind calms
 and the *crêpe* ripples flatten.
 My small boat will go off from this point on,
 to give the rest of my life to the rivers and seas.

This lyric is so characteristically the work of Su Shi that we do not think of it as belonging in the song lyric tradition, but recalling all the poems on going home drunk heightens its humor, which in turn deepens its pathos. There was the Tang and Five Dynasties motif of the "Drunken Lord" 醉公子, about the drunken husband's return to his resentful wife. There is the *xiaoling* motif of the man's leaving the company of his beloved and not remembering who helped him on his horse. Poor Su Dongpo is out on East Slope—we presume at some pavilion like Lingao 臨皋—engaged in solitary drinking. When he gets home late, the household is asleep and no one answers at the gate. This isn't supposed to happen, especially in song lyric. After everything that had happened to him—being thrown into Censorate prison, being ruthlessly interrogated, barely escaping with his life, and being exiled to poverty in dreary Huangzhou—this should have been the last straw. The snoring of the servant boy alerts both Su and his readers to what is about to happen.

At this point Su Shi should burst into tears at this final humiliation, or raise a clamor to waken someone and assert his control over his small domestic world. He does neither. He takes control of the situation poetically, as he so often did. The soundly sleeping servant could stir a master's rage; instead Su Shi does not listen to it anymore; he "listens to the sound of the river."

The small helplessness leads to the larger awareness of how even his physical body is not his own. This was the general condition of the empire's servants, sent from place to place at imperial pleasure, exiled to a backwater without salary, always scrambling. He resents it and looks forward to a time when it will be over. As the night wears on, the sound of the river calms him, and the river becomes a path, a way out—at least poetically. A poetic “way out” was all he had.

EIGHT

The Generation after Su Shi

When Su Shi took up composing song lyrics in his mid-thirties in Hangzhou, he was a rising star in the literary world. While he was serving in Hangzhou, his famous patron Ouyang Xiu passed away in 1072. Ouyang Xiu had just composed his lyric series to "Cai sangzi," on West Lake in Yingzhou, where he had retired. It is easy to see those already nostalgic lyrics as the swan song of the old *xiaoling*. The other representative of *xiaoling*, Zhang Xian, was to live on a few more years as a superannuated friend of Su Shi, providing at least a formal continuity in song lyric.

A few years earlier, in 1069, Wang Anshi had come to power and had begun to promulgate a set of radical reforms that would set in motion violent rifts in the elite community, rifts that continued until the fall of the Northern Song and beyond. The history of song lyric cannot be reduced to this turbulent phase in Northern Song political history, but neither can it be entirely separated from it. Su Shi came to occupy a central position in this struggle. A brief summary may be useful. Wang Anshi persuaded the new Emperor Shenzong (r. 1067–85) to implement a major program of reform. This met with increasing resistance from many in the bureaucracy, a number of whose senior members withdrew from public life. The government's frustration with bureaucratic resistance and criticism led eventually to Su Shi's trial and exile. When Shenzong died in 1085, the underage Zhezong (r. 1085–1100) came to the throne, with

the Empress Dowager acting as regent. The Empress Dowager set out to recall all the banished "Conservatives" and undo the policies of the earlier "Reform" government, then staffed by Wang Anshi's followers. This was the Yuanyou reign (1086–94). Su Shi was then in high favor; he recalled his younger followers and recommended many others for positions.

When Zhezong came of age in 1094, he was determined to carry on the work of his father. The "Reform" government was reinstated, and the Yuanyou government was purged—with a vindictive harshness that surpassed even that of the earlier age. Su Shi and those associated with him were the targets of particularly punitive postings. Many, like Chao Buzhi, retired from office. The harsher the treatment Su Shi and his followers received, the more charisma they accrued. The government no longer had the power to control "reputation"; they could either ratify popular opinion or deepen it by opposition and persecution.

When Huizong succeeded to the throne in 1100, he eventually continued Zhezong's policies, proscribing Su Shi's writings and the writings of his family and some of his followers. Beneath that surface of political policy, however, Su Shi was more popular than ever, even among Huizong's own literary establishment. This split between political policy and practice was particularly unstable, with occasional violent acts of repression occurring in an atmosphere of tacit, almost boundless, admiration for what was called "Su Shi learning" (*Suxue* 蘇學). Huizong's greatest tragedy was, of course, losing his empire to the Jurchens; but his second tragedy was his failure to reassert imperial control over the cultural sphere. Huizong could not grasp that imperial control over literati culture had already been lost for four centuries and would never return.¹

Su Shi's large presence throughout this period, both during his lifetime and posthumously, cannot be ignored. His social network was so

1. Through the seventh century, one's fame as a writer was largely contingent on the approbation of the emperor and his central court. While this was not always the case, it was the norm. Even the least courtly writer, Tao Yuanming, owed his reputation in part to the admiration of Yan Yanzhi, the premier court poet of the early Liu-Song, as well as to the attention of Prince Zhaoming in the first part of the sixth century. In the reign of Xuanzong in the eighth century, the determination of literary value largely passed from the court to literati communities. Emperors might have their favorite writers, but imperial taste carried little weight in the broader judgment of the literati community.

broad and influential that those who were not part of it, either directly or on a secondary level (that is, friends of Su Shi's prominent protégés), deserve some special attention. That tightly knit political and social circle did not mean that his protégés all wrote song lyrics in the manner of Su Shi; but Su Shi the political and cultural hero could not entirely be disentangled from Su Shi the writer—belles lettres itself was what "Su Shi learning" came to mean. Anyone who succeeded in belles lettres could be accused of practicing "Su Shi learning," whether or not they were following Su Shi.

Su Shi's presence in late Northern Song literature goes well beyond his first generation protégés, but they are the most famous. They were very much "a generation." Su Shi was born in 1037 and Yan Jidao in 1038. The subsequent world of prominent late eleventh and early twelfth-century lyricists was populated almost entirely by people born within an eleven-year span, beginning with the oldest of Su Shi's protégés, Huang Tingjian (people whose names are in *italics* were not part of Su Shi's network):

Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅	1045
<i>Chao Duanli</i> 晁端禮	1046 ²
Li Zhiyi 李之儀	1048 ³
Qin Guan 秦觀	1049
Zhao Lingzhi 趙令時	1051
He Zhu 賀鑄	1052
Chao Buzhi 晁補之	1053
Chen Shidao 陳師道	1053
Zhang Lei 張耒	1054 ⁴
<i>Zhou Bangyan</i> 周邦彥	1056

2. Chao Duanli was not directly a part of Su Shi's network, but he has many lyrics exchanged with his junior relative Chao Buzhi and is a good example of the "tendrils" of the network. In the early twelfth century he emerged in Huizong's musical establishment—though he died before taking office. Luo Kanglie 1990, 116–17, argues that he served for a few months.

3. Wang Zhaopeng 2007, 222.

4. Zhang Lei was hardly an important lyricist, but he did write some lyrics and a preface for He Zhu's lyrics.

This remarkable concentration of important figures in song lyric may be contrasted with the thirty-year interval that separated the birth in 1007 of Ouyang Xiu, the youngest member of the earlier generation, and the birth of Su Shi. If we omit Zhou Bangyan, who was outside the network, they were all born within less than a decade.

It would be a mistake to think that this generation represented the limit of Su Shi's influence. Each of the figures not in italics was tied directly or indirectly to Su Shi, and all took different paths in writing song lyric.

The next significant figure among Su Shi's admirers, born over two decades after Zhou Bangyan, was Ye Mengde 葉夢得 (1077–1148), a maternal cousin of Chao Buzhi, who as an adolescent was forming associations with the Su Shi circle at the end of the Yuanyou reign.⁵ Young enough to escape the stigma of "Su Shi learning," Ye enjoyed the favor of Huizong and became an even more powerful political and cultural figure in the early Southern Song. Ye Mengde hardly represents a new turn, however. He is even closer to the Master than the Master's first-generation followers. Some of his lyrics sound so much like Su Shi that one was misattributed to the Master himself. As we observed earlier, the problem with taking Su Shi to represent a lineage in song lyric is that one could be part of the lineage only by being "like Su Shi," and, unfortunately, one could truly be "like Su Shi" only by "being Su Shi." Having one's lyrics mistakenly attributed to Su Shi is a troubling testimony to Su Shi's ultimate success.

Ye Mengde's work is useful in making the essential distinction between sharing "Su Shi's presence" and "writing like Su Shi." To speak of "Su Shi's influence" is meaningless without specifying the nature of such "influence." When a Ye Mengde lyric was believed to have been written by Su Shi, we have one extreme—something we find only in the next generation of Su Shi's followers. When Huang Tingjian wrote a lyric to "Niannu jiao" (the tune of Su Shi's lyric on Red Cliff) that he thought, with satisfaction, "continued" Su Shi's famous lyric, Huang

5. Ye Mengde was a significant figure in a "generation," but he did not become one of the major canonical writers of lyric. As I will discuss later, only Li Qingzhao achieved that status in the century that separates the generation under discussion and that of the first wave of major Southern Song lyricists.

clearly believed it belonged to a commensurable kind of lyric—though few modern readers would think it sounded anything like Su Shi or his famous lyric.

At another extreme is Qin Guan, a devoted protégé of the Master, whose works are in a totally different style, yet he was both admired and criticized by the Master. While Qin Guan in no way imitated Su Shi, his transformation of song lyric was, to some degree, enabled by Su Shi's "presence": he was in the charmed circle of lyricists who were close to the Master, and he was in conversation with the Master.

At yet a third extreme we find Chen Shidao and Zhao Lingzhi, both predominantly writing *xiaoling*. Chen Shidao's *xiaoling* were highly polished, with echoes of the older *xiaoling*; Zhao Lingzhi, meanwhile, truly continued the mid-century *xiaoling* tradition, to the degree that several of Yan Jidao's lyrics are also attributed to him. Su Shi's literary network was a broad and tolerant umbrella, which included diverse practices of song lyric—some looking backward, some anticipating the future, and some resulting in personal *manci* that seemed to their writers more like Su Shi than they do to us. The distinction of writing song lyric more obviously "like Su Shi" awaited the next generation, that of Ye Mengde.

Unlike the lyricists active in the mid-eleventh century, Su Shi and the diverse generation of his protégés bring us more firmly into an age of full "authorship." As with the process of understanding classical poetry, readers hope to refer the text to the particulars of its author's biography. This invites attention to the dating of lyrics. Such an invitation has its perils and consequent cautions. There are still a great many lyrics that we have no way of dating, and undatable lyrics tend to fall into certain categories, which can skew our understanding of the history of the genre. By and large datable lyrics begin to appear in quantity in the 1080s and increase thereafter. There is no mystery to this. Even apart from the growing number of occasional subtitles and prefaces, these lyrics increasingly reference place and circumstance, which can be correlated with what we know about the careers of many of the lyricists. Generally, we know where they served in the Yuanyou reign and where they were exiled after the Yuanyou reign. Most of the *xiaoling* of Yan

Shu, Ouyang Xiu, and Yan Jidao do not reference particular places; as we move into the last decades of the eleventh century, however, often in *manci* and sometimes in *xiaoling* places are referenced. It is understandable that lyricists in exile or retirement under duress wrote about their "place" a great deal. This does, however, tend to make song lyric simply another kind of document in the great political drama that was unfolding. In such an increasingly documentary regime of interest on the part of readers, critics, and scholars, undatable lyrics tend to take a secondary place—as they had not in the mid-eleventh century.

Lyrics drawing on the discourse of love tend not to be datable. Sometimes critics are fond of attributing them to the tempestuous youth of the lyricist. Not only is this a flawed presumption in general, but one of the few credible documents we have, Li Zhiyi's colophon on He Zhu, suggests that lyrics on love could easily be tied to a tempestuous middle age, as Huang Tingjian speculated when commenting ironically on the "seductive power" of song lyric. Scholars such as Ma Xingrong date Huang Tingjian's vernacular and amorous lyrics to his youth, but the mid-twelfth century Wang Zhuo dates them to later in his life. Neither have any substantive evidence for either scenario for more than a handful of lyrics. In the long run, the credible dating of lyrics in this rough half-century of changes hinges on only one particular kind of lyric.

Our understanding of song lyric in the generation after Su Shi is profoundly shaped by the social and cultural network that formed around the Master, along with *their* judgments on song lyric. These writers knew each other, discussed each other's work, and built such a reputation as a group that they possessed a distinct "survival advantage" over other lyricists over the course of the Southern Song, when the earlier song lyric tradition was being consolidated and committed to print. Unfortunately, many accounts of their interactions and judgments are preserved in later anecdotes, whose historical credibility diminishes with their distance from the period. Su's closest disciples suffered purges and exiles along with Su Shi, and that added to their cachet. The proscription of Su Shi's writings in 1103, along with the writings of Huang Tingjian and Qin Guan, only enhanced their reputations. The network, however, was much broader—to the extent that the only famous lyricist of this generation who was not at all connected

in some way to the network was Zhou Bangyan, whose talents seem to have become fully recognized only in the Southern Song.

We must stress that in the process of canon formation, belonging to the network was essential to, but did not guarantee, one's reputation as a lyricist. Zhao Lingzhi (1051–1134), a member of the imperial family, was a devoted follower of Su Shi. In the purges after the Yuanyou reign, he was fined rather than exiled. His lyrics, however, continued the mid-century *xiaoling* tradition and were not a subject of discussion. They were preserved for the most part only in *Yuefu yaci*. He was, however, the longest-lived member of that generation, and his *Houqing lu* 侯鯖錄 dating to the early Southern Song preserved the discourse of the community. Li Zhiyi was one of Su Shi's most devoted followers. Again, his prose colophons tell us much about the understanding of lyric around the turn of the twelfth century. But his lyric production has been largely ignored. Chen Shidao was one of the prominent classical poets of this generation, and yet his small, less interesting collection of lyrics gets more attention.

It is worthwhile to step back a while from the master narrative of Su Shi and his diverse "family" and look at the field broadly, with some attention to those figures who have been overlooked. The world of lyric was splitting into the "aficionados" who favored "song lyric proper" (*bense*) and those who were disposed to treat lyric on the model of classical literature, with its lineages of "authors" and their biographies set against the backdrop of political history. The canon produced by Su Shi and his "family" represents the latter choice—though it is enriched because Su Shi's "family" included many who belonged to "song lyric proper."

The world of song lyric that emerged from this generation represented a range of thematic and stylistic choices, influenced but not entirely determined by the formal choice between *xiaoling* and *manci*. Some lyricists tended to write predominantly one form or the other, with *xiaoling* as the dominant "specialization"; most lyricists wrote in both forms and in a variety of styles. Few achieved an entirely individual style.

In his *A Study of the Lyric Field of Huizong's Reign* (*Huizong citan yanjiu* 徽宗詞壇研究) Zhuge Yibing 諸葛憶兵 identifies three "trends" in Huizong's reign: toward the "high style" (*yahua* 雅化), toward the

"low style" (*suhua* 俗化), and toward the "classical poetry style" (*shihua* 詩化). As mechanical as such a division is, these trends represent qualities that contemporaries would have recognized. Zhuge Yibing goes on to show the variations and distinctions within each. The problem is that each of these "trends" appears just as strongly in the quarter century before Huizong's reign, and each continued after the dynasty was forced to move south of the Yangzi. Moreover, a large number of the "lyricists of Huizong's reign" had been active in the quarter century before Huizong's reign; and when lyrics cannot be dated (as most cannot), it is impossible to circumscribe a period style out of an ongoing practice.

In the year following Zhuge Yibing's book, Peng Guozhong 彭國忠 published his *A Study of the Lyric Field of the Yuanyou Reign* (*Yuanyou citan yanjiu* 元祐詞壇研究) and confronted the same problem. His last chapter, "The Coexistence of a Multiplicity of Styles" ("Fengge de duoyuan bingcun" 風格的多元並存), discusses the question and then tries to identify those lyricists who Peng believes developed an individual style. Perhaps the only truly individual styles were those of Su Shi and Yan Jidao.

Zeng Zao's *Yuefu yaci* includes forty-eight lyrics by Shu Dan 舒亶 (1041–1103), almost an exact contemporary of Huang Tingjian, whose own lyrics were not included in *Yuefu yaci*. It was an even larger selection than that given to He Zhu, a marginal member of the Su Shi family who remained high in the lyric canon. The third-largest selection in the collection, it was exceeded only by the selections of Ouyang Xiu and Ye Mengde, a towering figure of Zeng Zao's age and a Su Shi follower. Qin Guan was not included, nor was Su Shi—though Zeng Zao was later to edit an edition of Su Shi's lyrics. Since Zeng Zao carefully disavowed any role as "anthologist," the Shu Dan lyrics he gave us may have been simply what he had. But it was a sizable corpus in circulation at the time. With very few exceptions (including a line from a lyric to an unknown tune cited by Hu Zi in the first series of *Tiaoxi yuyin conghua*), Shu Dan's works have been preserved solely through the *Yuefu yaci* selection.⁶

6. Zhou Bangyan, who was given twenty-nine lyrics in *Yuefu yaci*, belonged to neither of the feuding factions.

Who, then, was Shu Dan? He had a good career in Wang Anshi's Reform government and was one of the figures instrumental in bringing the Censorate case against Su Shi. This particularly unpleasant aspect of his career is perhaps one reason his song lyrics have been ignored. Su Shi's followers did not talk about Shu Dan simply because he was not a member of their circle—this was in an age when social affiliation became political, and political affiliation became social, and literature was dragged along.

Shu Dan was evidently a good friend of Cui Gongdu, whose putative colophon on Feng Yansi's collection played such a problematic role in the history of song lyric.⁷ None of Cui Gongdu's lyrics survive. Shu Dan's work does, however, suggest a community still interested in the mid-eleventh century *xiaoling* style. Shu Dan continued this tradition, though often with occasional prefaces that show how it was used in social situations. When he was not writing for an occasion, we can still see the stylish, finely phrased *xiaoling* treating a phase of love, as in the following lyric to "Die lian hua."⁸

深炷熏爐局小院。手捻黃花，尚覺金猶淺。
回首畫堂雙語燕。無情漸漸看人遠。
相見爭如初不見。短鬢潘郎，斗覺年華換。
最是西風吹不斷。心頭往事歌中怨。

The deep-set wick in the incense burner
locked up in the small courtyard,
In my fingers I crumble a chrysanthemum,
still aware that its gold is yet pale.
I turn my head to the pair of chattering swallows
in the painted hall.
Without feeling they come to look on the person distantly.
Better to have never met than to meet now.
Young Pan, now with thinning locks,⁹
is suddenly aware that spring is gone.
Worst of all, the west wind cannot blow away

7. See Appendix A: "Manuscripts of Feng Yansi."

8. Tang Guizhang 1999, 472.

9. Pan Yue, the archetypal handsome young man.

things in the heart that happened before,
or the resentment in the song.

Shu Dan is a nice comparison with his near contemporary Yan Jidao, who also held on to the old *xiaoling* style, but Yan Jidao had an intensity and ironic edge that distinguishes his work. Note the reformulation of the old motif of reencountering the beloved, with the comment that it would have been better not to have ever met.

Shu Dan of the "Reform Party" was a conservative lyricist, whose lyrics are a useful contrast to the changes in lyric that were taking place among the community of lyricists around Su Shi—the political "Conservatives." Qin Guan may be far from Su Shi, but he is farther still from Shu Dan. Although the selection in *Yuefu yaci* may be skewed, it gives Shu Dan only three *manci*, all to the common "Manting fang"; the rest are all *xiaoling* in a fairly consistent style. By comparison, Su Shi wrote in a remarkable range of lyric styles. Huang Tingjian's and Chao Buzhi's ranges are even broader, but in many of their best-known lyrics we need the pathos of the purges, exiles, and persecutions of Su Shi's followers as the background to make rather bland lyrics interesting.

Chao Duanli

If Shu Dan focused on a single type, others tried their hands at many types. They do range from the "high style" (*ya* 雅) to the very "low style" (*su* 俗), but, as I suggested, this binary opposition is inadequate to describe their differences. I will use the example of Chao Duanli 晁端禮 (1046–1113, *jinshi* 1073), whose lyric collection, *Xianzhai qinqu waipian* 閑齋琴曲外篇, survives in traced reproduction of a Southern Song edition.¹⁰ This is the same Southern Song series that gave us Ouyang Xiu's *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*, including the "lascivious" lyrics that were omitted in *Jinti yuefu*. Since the lyrics of Huang Tingjian and Chao Buzhi survive in Southern Song editions in the same series, and since both Chao Duanli and Huang Tingjian have a substantial

10. Wu and Tao, 77ff.

representation of "lascivious" lyrics, we have some sense of a typical lyric collection from the period.

The differences from Ouyang Xiu's *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* are no less telling. Chao Duanli lived on for forty years after the death of Ouyang Xiu. *Manci* became prominent, both for social occasions and typological scenes from the Entertainment Quarter. These represent the transformed legacy of Liu Yong, as do the songs celebrating the emperor and capital under the emperor's beneficent rule. The other striking change is the highly vernacular *xiaoling*; we see the first hints of this in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*, but Chao Duanli and Huang Tingjian are far more vernacular. We might imagine the topics of *Yuezhang ji* and *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* coming together, with the "high style" becoming still higher and the "low style" becoming even lower. To this are added some new topics, like "lyric on things" (*yongwu ci* 詠物詞).

Chao Duanli was a supremely mediocre lyricist who provides us a measure against which to read his more famous contemporaries. Cashiered and spending thirty years in private life, he seems to have hopefully ventured on some recognition in the capital by his numerous lyrics praising the emperor and imperial splendor. In Huizong's reign flattery was in fashion, and Chao finally succeeded in catching the attention of Cai Jing 蔡京, who had him given an appointment in Huizong's musical establishment, the Dasheng Fu 大晟府. Some claim he died on his way to take up his office; others insist that he briefly served in office before passing away.

The following Chao Duanli lyric to "Lütou ya" 綠頭鴨 has the subtitle "On the Moon" 詠月. Although it has come far from Liu Yong, it adheres to the routine pattern of the scene here, followed in the final stanza by memories of the beloved in the capital. It is one of the most common patterns of exposition in the generation, here assimilated to a *yongwu ci* on the moon.¹¹

晚雲收，淡天一片琉璃。爛銀盤、來從海底，皓色千里澄輝。
 瑩無塵、素娥淡佇，靜可數、丹桂參差。
 玉露初零，金風未凜，一年無似此佳時。
 露坐久，疏螢時度，烏鵲正南飛。瑤臺冷，欄干憑暖，欲下遲遲。

11. Tang Guizhang 1999, 540–41.

念佳人、音塵別後，對此應解相思。
最關情、漏聲正永，暗斷腸、花影偷移。
料得來宵，清光未減，陰晴天氣又爭知。
共凝戀、如今別後，還是隔年期。人強健，清尊素影，長願相隨。

Evening clouds withdraw,
in the pale sky a swathe of polished glass.
A gleaming silver plate,
 coming from the beneath the sea,
casts a pellucid glow of snowy white for a thousand leagues.
Pure without dust,
 the White Maiden, pale, stays long,
and in the stillness one can count
 the forking branches on the cinnabar cassia.
As the marble dew first falls,
autumn's metallic wind is not yet shivery,
on the whole no moment can compare to such excellence.
Long I sit in the open
with sparse fireflies sometimes passing,
just as the magpies are flying south.
The alabaster terrace is cold,
I lean at the balustrade until it grows warm,
and take my time going down.
I think on the fair one,
 on news since we parted,
facing this I'm sure she feels longing.
But what most catches the heart is
 just as the water-clock keeps dripping on,
the unseen heartbreak
 as the shadows of flowers shift stealthily.
I reckon that in the night to come
the moon's clear beams will not be diminished,
though who can tell whether the weather will be cloudy or clear?
Both frozen in yearning,
 and now, after parting,
it's already been a year.
The person hearty and hale,
and its white light in my cup of ale,
I wish will be with me always.

This was the mannered style of the day. But it was only one of the styles. Chao Duanli also wrote the following lyric to "Shangling chun" 上林春.¹²

相識來來，真個為伊，盡把精神役破。
 諦殢性□，嬌痴做處，雙眉鎮長愁鎖。為伊恁地、便諸事、
 自來饒過。
 暫時間未覷得，又早孜煎無那。
 想從來、性氣恁麼。那堪更等閑，經時拋擲。
 料得那裏、千倂萬億，嗔我也思量我。再歸見了，算應是、絮得些個。
 但初心、尚未改，任從摧挫。

Ever since I got to know her,
 my spirit has really been completely worked over by her.
 It truly captivates my being [],
 when she acts cute and innocent,
 her two brows constantly knit in sadness.
 When she's that way,
 I always forgive anything she's done.
 If I don't get to see her for even a little while,
 she can't help soon burning with misery.
 Her temper has always been that way,
 Not to mention that I've left her alone
 for a long time for no reason.
 I'm pretty sure to get all kinds of scolding and blame,
 as she rages at me and longs for me.
 So when I come back to see her again,
 I reckon I'd be sure to get a bit of yammering.
 But how I felt at the beginning still has not changed,
 so I'll just let her torture me.

The pleasure of the original is the lively vernacular of the monologue, whose flavor is hard to understand and impossible to capture. This is one of Liu Yong's worlds carried to an extreme, but with none of the psychological subtlety than animates the best of Liu Yong.

The *xiaoling* style of the mid-eleventh century was still very much part of the repertoire, as in Chao Duanli's lyric to "Ding fengbo" 定風波.¹³

12. Tang Guizhang 1999, 566.

13. Tang Guizhang 1999, 554.

花倚東風柳弄春。分明淺笑與輕顰。更憶當時聲細細，偎人。
秦箏輕襯砑羅裙。

別後此歡誰更共。春夢。只憑胡蝶伴飛魂。獨倚高樓還日暮。情緒。
浮煙漠漠雨昏昏。

The flowers catch the east wind, willows dally with spring.

So clear, her faint smile and her slightly knit brows.

And I further recall back then her soft, soft voice
as she cuddled close.

The Qin zither lay lightly between the folds
of her ironed gossamer skirt.

After parting, with whom can I share such pleasure ever again?

A spring dream.

All I have is the butterfly to companion my soul in flight.

I lean alone in the upper storey, and again twilight falls.

Feelings.

The drifting mist billowing and the rain, a hazy blur.

Chao Duanli is also a good representative of one important, continuing current in “song lyric proper”: the general avoidance of circumstantially specific subtitles and circumstantially specific references within the lyrics themselves. Circumstantial specificity is a profound issue in how song lyrics were used and understood. As song lyric became more and more often composed for social occasions and to please a prominent person, there was a natural pressure to refer specifically to that person (cf. Yan Jidao’s lyrics for Cai Jing that did not refer to Cai Jing).¹⁴ Because the lyric might refer explicitly to one person and one moment, that created a problem for its repeated use, because the lyric always referred back to the past occasion rather than being applicable to the present occasion. This, of course, was one aspect of the growing split between song lyric as a repeatable social practice and song lyric that referred to the biographical author—like “classical” genres.¹⁵

14. See Chapter 6, “Yan Jidao.” Singers, of course, had the skill to rework an existing lyric for a new occasion by changing inappropriate specifics or working in references to the current occasion.

15. In the circulation of lyrics in the Southern Song, in some versions we often find the occasional titles either omitted or shortened to some general, categorical topic. This is a nice example of the tension between the circumstantial, biographical impulse and the preference for the general, decontextualized lyric.

If a local governor erected a new audience hall, in earlier times this would call for a prose "account" (*ji* 記) or the composition of poems. In the generation we are describing, the party celebrating the event was central, and it called for song. Someone in the governor's entourage would be expected to provide a celebratory song for the singers. This was a recipe for banality, and the famous Chen Shidao provided something appropriately banal, to be sung to the tune "Nan kezi" 南柯子, "Congratulating Drafter Peng on the Completion of His Audience Hall" 賀彭舍人黃堂成.¹⁶

故國山河在，新堂冰雪生。萬家和氣賀初成。人在笙歌聲裏、
暗生春。
今代無雙士，當年第一人。杯行到手莫辭頻。明日鳳池歸路、
隔清塵。

The mountains and rivers of our dynasty survive,
a new hall, snow and frost appear.
The auspicious aura of ten thousand households
congratulates its completion.
The person is within the sound of songs to mouth organs,
and spring appears unseen.
A gentleman peerless in our age,
in our time the premier person.
The goblet passes to your hand
so don't keep on refusing.
Someday soon on the road back to the Secretariat
we will be cut off from Your Excellency.

The lyric begins with a familiar reference to a Du Fu poem—and an unfortunately prophetic one, since Du Fu's line refers to the loss of the capital and the ruin of the dynasty. The lyric goes on to praise the whiteness of the new plaster. The governor's building project pleases the population so much that a benign aura appears everywhere, while the celebration is like springtime.

The stanza transition is stunningly bad, repeating in different words the sentiment that "you are the best." This is followed by a reformulation

16. Tang Guizhang 1999, 752–53.

of the standard move in banquet song: don't refuse to drink. Yan Shu's singer explains why one should not refuse:

Mountains and rivers fill our eyes, but care
is wasted on things too far;
besides which, this grief at spring passing,
at wind and rain that bring down flowers;
it is better by far to take as your love
the person before your eyes.

In place of this we have the easy compliment: you'll be back in a position in the capital and away from us here in the provinces soon enough. It is no wonder earlier lyricists did not always keep their compositions but dashed them off for the moment. We can only wonder why Chen Shidao's were preserved.

In the following chapters we will consider the most prominent lyricists of this remarkable generation.

NINE

Su Shi's Protégés

In the preceding chapter I tried to sketch the opposition between song lyric as part of an author's larger place in "high literature" and song lyric as a separate sphere, with its own values and history. Decisions regarding how a particular lyricist should be judged are variable, as are the positions of critics in regard to the question. The constant is the question.

This chapter takes up those figures from the Su Shi circle who, in the long run, did not make it into the song lyric canon. All are considerable figures. Huang Tingjian obviously worked harder at song lyric than Su Shi; but when most readers think of Su Shi, they think of his song lyrics along with his classical poetry and prose. In the long history of Chinese literature, readers often returned to Huang Tingjian, especially to his classical poetry and criticism, but few paid much attention to his song lyrics. In modern anthologies of song lyric, he may be allotted a few lyrics; but his song lyrics as a group appear in a richly annotated modern edition, when far more prominent lyricists in the song lyric canon have none. In other words, the "specialist" sphere of song lyric will make some room for him only if the anthology is large enough; but the conservators of the "high literary" tradition consider him a major figure whose song lyrics deserve commentary, just as his classical poems have enjoyed critical attention since the Southern Song.

Despite his place among the four primary protégés of Su Shi, poor Chao Buzhi was not particularly successful as a classical poet or prose

writer. He took on the role of the song lyric aficionado; and while he was sometimes praised in the first part of the twelfth century for his sense of the musicality of the genre, that role did not hold in the long run. He ended up as yet another of Su Shi's protégés, given a few lyrics in a large modern anthology; but, like Huang Tingjian, there is a fine modern annotated edition of his song lyrics because he was part of Su Shi's family. The contested values I discussed above remain active forces.

We will return to Li Zhiyi later for his critical comments, but he was less fortunate than even Chao Buzhi. Li Zhiyi was, arguably, Su Shi's most loyal follower—and, perhaps, more talented in the genre than either Huang Tingjian or Chao Buzhi. Like Qin Guan (who gets his own chapter), Li Zhiyi followed a very different path from Su Shi in song lyric. He was conservative and retrospective. He was a close friend of He Zhu, most of whose lyrical work is also backward looking. The inexplicable fate of fashion made He Zhu a darling of the Southern Song, while Li Zhiyi was forgotten.

Huang Tingjian

Huang Tingjian should have been the brightest literary star of his generation: he was learned and very talented. He had the misfortune of becoming attached to the dynasty's only true literary genius, Su Shi, who not only knew himself that he was a genius, but was also recognized as such by everyone else. What Huang accomplished with effort, Su Shi did with apparent ease. It is to Huang Tingjian's credit that he did not simply give up in despair; he acknowledged Su Shi's genius and developed a poetics that mere mortals could learn. He seems to have known that it would always be "Su Shi and Huang Tingjian" and never "Huang Tingjian and Su Shi."

In classical poetry Huang Tingjian tried to offer a "method" of how to write good poetry. Only nine years younger than Su Shi, and the most senior among "Su Shi's protégés," Huang Tingjian understood that Su Shi's claim of immediacy in composition, following mood and circumstance, offered no replicable model for a younger writer other than "being

Su Shi." Huang Tingjian deserves credit for understanding that there was no possible way to engage with Su Shi's talent except by acknowledging his genius, and offering to others the possibility of success through learning, laborious effort, and "methods" (*fa* 法), through which the aspiring classical poet could work with the received tradition to get beyond it. This was, indeed, a poetics that could be followed—and it was indeed followed by many later writers. One core tenet of his poetic pedagogy involved the creative transformation of earlier texts. This practice was very much at the heart of contemporary song lyric, with its roots in *yinkuo*; and it is hard to say whether Huang Tingjian's classical poetics influenced lyricists such as Qin Guan and He Zhu, or whether the common practices of lyricists influenced Huang's classical poetics.

While the creative appropriation of earlier lines of poetry was important in song lyric, the heart of the matter was the lyricist's fluency in reuse that was enabled by the formal tune patterns. This was essentially different from the lock-step rhythms of classical poetry. Mastery of the form was a talent that could not be taught. No other lyricist tried so many styles and poetic registers in song lyric as Huang Tingjian. He could recognize genius—in Yan Jidao as well as in Su Shi—but it was simply out of his own reach.

The critical reception of Huang's lyrics was as diverse as his lyric output. Chen Shidao's 陳師道 (1053–1102) "remarks on poetry," *Houshan shihua* 後山詩話, contains manifestly later material, so it is difficult to credit judgments there as necessarily Chen Shidao's own. There we read that the greatest masters of contemporary song lyric, surpassing even the Tang, were Qin Guan and Huang Tingjian (Su Shi being excluded because he wrote song lyric as classical poetry [以詩為詞]).¹ Chao Buzhi, a member of Su Shi's inner circle, judged that Huang's lyrics were "indeed lofty and fine, but not the language of a specialist, just singing good classical poems to a tune" (固高妙, 然不是當行家語, 是著腔子唱好詩).² These two judgments are exactly opposite: Chao Buzhi's

1. Deng Zimian 2008A, 213.

2. Wu Zeng, *Nenggaizhai manlu* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1979), 489. This comes from Zhao Lingzhi, *Houqing lu* 侯鯖錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002), 206. It is not there explicitly attributed to Chao Buzhi, but it immediately follows another of Chao's judgments on early lyric and is taken to be Chao's.

critique of Huang Tingjian's lyrics is functionally equivalent to Chen Shidao's critique of Su Shi's.

We should not let the opposing judgments blind us to the shared question. Song lyric is supposed to be something essentially different from classical poetry; proximity to classical poetry discredited it in some circles. The issue was what song lyric should be and what kind of writing was "proper" to it. This was not a central issue in classical poetry at the time.³ Huang Tingjian's case was a contested one in the twelfth century. Li Qingzhao includes Huang Tingjian in the list of late eleventh-century lyricists who, unlike Su Shi, understand the "difference" of song lyric from classical poetry, but he "loves allusions and has many mistakes—just like a fine jade with flaws its value is reduced" (尚故實而多疵病, 譬如良玉有瑕, 價自減矣). Wang Zhuo makes him and Chao Buzhi simply followers of Su Shi, both of whom achieved "70 to 80 percent" of the Master.⁴

A real "specialist" or "professional" (*danghang jia* 當行家), in Chao Buzhi's words, would know what "should be done"; Huang Tingjian was a very talented amateur. Interest in his lyrics has been sustained by his stature in classical literature, which is, in turn, reflected in the printing record. The earlier lyricists we now consider of greatest importance in Northern Song song lyric are generally represented by one or, at most, two known Southern Song editions. Huang Tingjian had at least six known printed editions in the Southern Song, two of which have survived, one in his collected works and one in the *Qinqu waipian* 琴趣外篇 (*Zither Delights*) series. One reason is surely because he was Huang Tingjian, with a general literary reputation matched only by Ouyang Xiu and Su Shi.

Su Shi's precedent loomed large in some of Huang Tingjian's lyrics. Huang matched rhymes of Su Shi's lyrics, as in the "Que qiao xian" 鵲橋仙 on the Seventh Eve, and many others.⁵ If Su Shi rewrote Zhang Zhihe's "Fisherman's Lyrics," so did Huang Tingjian, using "Zhegu

3. It would become so with Yan Yu, who was writing in the first part of the thirteenth century.

4. See Chapter 13, "Recovering a History."

5. Ma and Zhu, 148.

tian."⁶ Perhaps Huang's most famous lyric was a 1098 version of "Niannu jiao," a tune that would always bear the weight of Su Shi's famous lyric on Red Cliff. In *Tiaoxi yuyin conghua* Hu Zi tells us how pleased Huang was with it, and how he thought he had done a continuation of the Red Cliff song.⁷ Like many of Su Shi's lyrics, it begins with a long occasional preface:

On the 18th of the eighth month with a group of others I walked from Yong'an Mansion to stop by Zhang Kuanfu's garden, there to await the moon. We happened to have fine ale, which was poured for all the guests from golden lotus-leaf decanters. Among the guests was Sun Yanli, who was skilled at playing the flute. I took brush in hand and composed a lyric without further embellishment.

八月十八日同諸生步自永安樓，過張寬夫園待月。偶有名酒，因以金荷酌眾客。客有孫彥立，善吹笛。援筆作樂府長短句，文不加點。⁸

斷虹霽雨，淨秋空，山染修眉新綠。
桂影扶疏，誰便道，今夕清輝不足。
萬里青天，姮娥何處，駕此一輪玉。寒光零亂，為誰偏照醺醺。
年少從我追遊，晚涼幽徑，繞張園森木。
醉倒金荷，家萬里，歡得尊前相屬。
老子平生，江南江北，最愛臨風曲。孫郎微笑，坐來聲噴霜竹。

Broken rainbow, rain clearing
washes clean autumn skies,
mountains dyed fresh green in long brows.
Cassia light wafts everywhere,⁹
and who would claim
that its clear glow this evening is wanting?¹⁰
In thousands of miles of blue sky
where does Chang E¹¹

6. Ma and Zhu, 152.

7. Ma and Zhu, 12. The claim of "continuation" probably refers to the "song" (ge 歌) in Su Shi's first "Poetic Exposition on Red Cliff" ("Chibi fu" 赤壁賦). However, the choice to do this in a song lyric to "Niannu jiao" inescapably links it to the famous lyric cited earlier.

8. Tang Guizhang 1999, 497.

9. "Cassia" refers to the moon.

10. The moon is always full on the fifteenth of a lunar month, so on that day the moon was beginning to wane.

11. The goddess in the moon.

drive this single wheel of jade?
 Her cold beams fall scattering in disarray,
 for whom does she shine particularly on the *linglu* brew?¹²
 Young men accompany me roaming
 down a secluded path in the evening cool
 around the dense groves of Zhang's garden.
 Drunkenly we empty the golden lotus-leaf,
 my home is thousands of miles away,
 but I enjoy getting to urge them on in drinking.
 This old fellow all his life
 has gone south of the River, then north of the River,
 and I most love a melody on the breeze.
 Young Sun gives a faint smile,
 and right then notes spurt forth from the frosty bamboo.¹³

Huang Tingjian has a mature mastery, here with the shifting moods called for in *manci*. But this is not Su Shi. Neither is it the judgment of Huang's lyrics attributed to Chao Buzhi: "just singing good poems to a tune." It is also not the kind of lyric that would cause the monk Faxiu to tell him he is going to hell for encouraging vice.¹⁴ There are, however, lyrics in Huang's collection that *could* justify either response.

Perhaps the most attractive lyrics in his work reflect simplicity, even naïveté. Given Huang Tingjian's learning and consummate sophistication, though, it is a studied naïveté. The following well-known lyric to "Qingping yue" was one of his best-loved.¹⁵

春歸何處，寂寞無行路。若有人知春去處，喚取歸來同住。
 春無蹤跡誰知，除非問取黃鸝。百轉無人能解，因風飛過薔薇。

Where did spring go when it left,
 silently, with no road to follow?
 If there's someone who knows where spring's gone,
 call it to come back and stay with us.

12. The name of a fine ale.

13. His flute.

14. See Chapter 6, "Yan Jidao."

15. Tang Guizhang 1999, 507; Ma and Zhu, 208.

Spring has no tracks that anyone can tell,
 unless you ask the oriole.
 But no one can understand its warbles and trills,
 as it flies with the breeze past the roses.

This belongs to a long tradition of playing on spring's "departure" as a movement in space, with many of the same tropes. Although here it is an oriole that is questioned, it is hard not to hear one of the most famous of all *xiaoling* in the background.¹⁶

I have no way to make spring stay.
 With tear-filled eyes I ask the flowers, the flowers do not speak,
 a tumult of red goes flying off past the swing.

Indeed, beneath the simplicity of the surface here, we see Huang Tingjian's poetics of "appropriation" (David Palumbo-Liu's term) working with the familiar material of the *xiaoling* tradition. And yet this had long been the norm in song lyric.

Song lyric had been used in Buddhist proselytizing, and Huang Tingjian (like Wang Anshi before him) tried his hand at Chan lyrics.¹⁷ He even did a lyric adaptation (*yinkuo*) of one of his own classical poems.¹⁸

Huang Tingjian wrote quite a few lyrics in the vernacular. We know of some anonymous popular lyrics in the vernacular and assume that it was a general phenomenon for a certain social level of Northern Song song lyrics. Huang Tingjian's use of the vernacular provoked the ire of critics, but, as I have noted earlier, the inclusion of vernacular lyrics in song was common in this period.¹⁹ Huang Tingjian, however, went considerably farther into this territory than his contemporaries; and when Ma Xingrong encounters usages with no parallel in the vast Song textual record, then we seem to have passed from the mere "vernacular"

16. See "Ouyang Xiu and His Collections" in Chapter 5, "The *Xiaoling* Collections (II)."

17. For example, Ma and Zhu, 86–93.

18. Ma and Zhu, 84.

19. For example, see Qin Guan's "Manyuan hua" 滿園花 (Xu Peijun 1985, 49), or Chao Buzhi's "Moshan xi" 暮山溪 (Liu Naichang, 191).

into "slang" or "argot," the special language of a community that foregrounds its own distinction.

The claim that Huang wrote his vernacular lyrics in his youth and gave them up after the monk Faxiu told him he would go to hell because of them can be traced back to the twelfth century.²⁰ Huang Tingjian mentions the encounter with Faxiu in his 1079 preface to Yan Jidao's lyrics, but his sardonic comments do not sound at all repentant. This may tell us that he was in fact already writing such lyrics in the 1070s, but it is not to say that he did not continue to write them; many seem to be datable to later in his life. Huang first wrote to Su Shi in 1078 (their first verifiable meeting was not until 1086), so some of the vernacular lyrics precede Huang's involvement with Su Shi.

Huang's lyrics, often *manci*, tend to be consummately performable monologues of lovers, and suggest another side of Liu Yong's influence.²¹ The following lyric is to "Xinyuan chun" 沁園春, the same tune to which Su Shi wrote an early lyric to his brother:²²

把我身心，為伊煩惱，算天便知。
恨一回相見，百方做計，未能偎倚，早覓東西。
鏡裏拈花，水中捉月，覷着無由得近伊。
添憔悴，鎮花銷翠減，玉瘦香肌。
奴兒。又有行期。你去即無妨我共誰。
向眼前常見，心猶未足，怎生禁得，真個分離。
地角天涯，我隨君去。掘井為盟無改移。
君須是，做些兒相度，莫待臨時。

He's got my body and my heart
all worked up—
I suppose that Heaven knows.
I can't stand how each time we meet,
we have to devise all sorts of plans,
but before we are able to cuddle,
we have to go different ways again.

20. See Chen Shan 陳善, *Menshi xinhua* 捫蝨新話, 3, cited in Ma and Zhu 2001, 329.

21. A good example of Huang's debt to Liu Yong in such lyrics can be found in the "Guī tiān lè yīn" 歸田樂引 beginning, "The evening rain blurs the stairs" (暮雨濛階砌). Ma and Zhu, 58.

22. Tang Guizhang 1999, 532; Ma and Zhu, 1.

It's like picking flowers in a mirror,
 or grabbing the moon in the water,
 I just look but have no way to get near him.
 It makes me more haggard,
 and always the flowers wither and green leaves diminish,
 and my fragrant marble flesh grows gaunt.

And now, sweetheart,
 you're going to go off again!
 Well, off you go then, but there's nothing to stop me from being with
 someone else!
 But even when you're always before my eyes,
 my heart's still not satisfied,
 so how could I take
 really parting from you!
 To the corners of the earth and the edge of the sky
 I'll follow you.
 Dig a well and take an oath, it will never change.
 So you had better
 make a plan
 and don't wait till the last minute.

The following lyric to "Gui tian le yin" 歸田樂引 is simply vernacular, designed to provoke a smile in its performance of a moment in the theater of love, indeed, essentially another version of the same moment that we saw earlier in Chao Duanli.²³

對景還銷瘦。被個人、把人調戲，我也心兒有。
 憶我又喚我，見我嗔我，天甚教人怎生受。
 看承幸廝勾。又是樽前眉峰皺。是人驚怪，冤我忒攔就。
 拚了又舍了，定是這回休了，及至相逢又依舊。

I face the scenery, thin again,
 because of my darling
 giving me such a hard time,
 but there she is in my heart.
 When she thinks of me, she summons me,
 when she sees me, she's cross with me,
 how can Heaven let a person go through this!

23. Tang Guizhang 1999, 525; Ma and Zhu, 59.

I watch out for a chance to get close to her.
 But again as we drink her brows knit in a frown.
 Everyone's amazed—
 they do me wrong by thinking I'm too gentle with her.
 Drop her and be done with it, get rid of her,
 and I'm sure that this time it's over,
 but when I meet her, it's again as it was before.

These were, no doubt, the kinds of lyrics Faxiu was thinking of when he told Huang Tingjian he was going to hell for encouraging vice. In a broader sense, that anecdote marks the increasingly moralistic temper of society in the late eleventh century. However, when we step back and reflect, it is hard to find a "vice" here—except for being in love. What is probably troubling is the expression of the woman's power over the enamored man, which was very common in Chinese vernacular lyrics. From the "enthraling" power of Liu Yong's stars to monologues such as these, we see the inversion of the old lyric motif of the woman disempowered by longing for the absent man. In short, we see the nascent counterculture, marked by the appearance of the vernacular to represent situations that an audience or readership would recognize as a repressed truth whose only access is through the vernacular.

If Huang Tingjian's vernacular lyrics were disapproved, the following lyric to "Moshan xi" 驀山溪, "Presented to the Hengyang singer Chen Xiang" 贈衡陽妓陳湘, was among his best loved.²⁴ It was written in 1104, the year before his death, when he was on his way to exile in Yizhou.

鶯鶯翡翠，小小思珍偶。眉黛斂秋波，盡湖南、山明水秀。
 娉娉嫋嫋，恰近十三餘，春未透。花枝瘦。正是愁時候。
 尋花載酒。肯落誰人後。只恐遠歸來，綠成陰、青梅如豆。
 心期得處，每自不由人，長亭柳。君知否。千里猶回首。

Mandarin ducks and kingfishers
 are small yet want a fine mate.
 When her brows' mascara draws back autumn-wave glances,
 all over Hu'nan
 the mountains are bright and the waters, splendid.²⁵

24. Tang Guizhang 1999, 500.

25. This plays on the cliché of a woman's face like a landscape: her brows are hills, and her glances are autumn water.

"Cute and lithe,"
 just nearing "a bit over thirteen,"
 before spring has penetrated deeply.
 A spray of flowers gaunt—
 that's the moment when she is most sad.
 In taking ale to seek out flowers
 I'm hardly willing to fall behind anyone.
 But I just worry that when I return from far away,
 the green leaves will be making shade,
 and the green plums will be as big as beans.²⁶
 Getting your heart's desire
 never depends on one's own powers,
 willows at the rest station on the road.²⁷
 Do you realize
 that a thousand leagues away, still I turn my head?

The lyric weaves in very famous lines from the Tang poet Du Mu, both directly quoted and rephrased. If the vernacular poems were directly performable, this lyric is performable in a very different sense: the vernacular lyrics are role-playing, but if Chen Xiang, a local singer from a backwater, performs this, she is performing an apparently heart-felt tribute to her by the famous Huang Tingjian. She doesn't have a "professional name" like the great courtesans of Bianjing in Liu Yong's lyrics; her real surname is probably Chen.

Huang Tingjian was not a great writer of song lyric, judging from the aficionado lineage that has continued to modern times. He was, however, a brilliant writer, whose lyrics, if lacking "the gift," tried new things in ways no others did. He was caught between Su Shi's large, independent space and the lineage of "song lyric proper"; and there was little room for him between the two.

26. Drawing on a famous poem by the ninth-century poet Du Mu, this suggests that Chen Xiang, just now entering the springtime of her life, will have matured to the "summer" of her life by the time he returns.

27. Willows were associated with parting, and this line probably refers to where he had to part from her when he left Hengyang.

Chao Buzhi

Chao Buzhi did not really appear on the cultural stage until 1086, the beginning of the Yuanyou reign, when Su Shi and the "Conservatives" were called back to the capital and Huang Tingjian finally met Su Shi in person for the first time. Chao Buzhi had passed the examination in 1079, and he came into view when Su Shi was handing out offices to all the talented protégés he admired. This lasted less than a decade. In 1094 Zhezong took over personal rule from the Empress Dowager, called back the Wang Anshi reformers, and banished those in the previous government to the most unpleasant provincial locations in the empire.

Chao Buzhi was described as a follower of Su Shi, but someone who was not quite up to the Master; this does not adequately represent his work. A lyric to "Mo yu'er" 摸魚兒, subtitled "Lodging at East Floodplain" 東皋寓居, was written on his final departure from public life in 1103 and is one of his best-known works.²⁸

買陂塘、旋栽楊柳，依稀淮岸江浦。
東皋嘉雨新痕漲，沙觜鷺來鷗聚。
堪愛處最好是、一川夜月光流渚。無人獨舞。
任翠幄張天，柔茵藉地，酒盡未能去。
青綾被，莫憶金閨故步。儒冠曾把身誤。
弓刀千騎成何事，荒了邵平瓜圃。
君試觀，滿青鏡、星星鬢影今如許。功名浪語。
便似得班超，封侯萬里，歸計恐遲暮。

I bought a pond,
then planted willows,
vaguely like the banks of the Huai or the Yangzi's shore.
With a good rain at East Floodplain new ripples overflow,
Egrets come to its spit of sand and gulls gather.
What's most lovable, the very best,
is a whole river of moonlight flowing past isles by night.
No one else is there as I dance alone.
Let the green canopy spread over the sky,

28. Tang Guizhang 1999, 714; Liu and Yang, 15.

a soft cushion of grass lie over the ground,
 and I can't leave even when my ale is gone.
 The green satin blanket—²⁹
 don't think back on former paces in the gilded chambers.
 A scholar's cap has made a mess of my life.
 A thousand guards with bows and swords comes to what?—
 just letting Shaoping's melon path run to seed.³⁰
 Just take a look—
 in the green bronze mirror
 the reflection of so many white-flecked locks now.
 Great deeds and fame are empty words.
 Even if Ban Chao³¹
 was ennobled ten thousand leagues away,
 I suspect it was getting too late for his plans to go home.

Chao Buzhi had a talent for making a conversational monologue fit perfectly the pattern of the melody. No one would mistake this for a lyric from the mid-eleventh century, but such an expression of regret for the life of an official in the final stanza was present in Liu Yong and continued in other lyrics of Chao Buzhi's generation. What has changed is that the quiet life of retirement has replaced the loves of the Entertainment Quarter as the alternative to public life. Calling his site of retirement "East Floodplain" (Donggao 東皋) cannot but recall Su Shi, who named himself Su Dongpo for "East Slope" (Dongpo 東坡).³² In the opening Chao Buzhi tells us he bought a "pond" (*potang* 陂塘), literally an "embankment [slope] and pond." And like Su Dongpo at East Slope he is working out the life of a private person, removed both from public life and his network of friends.

One can scarcely imagine these lyrics being sung. Su Shi often infused his lyrics with a strangeness and difference that swerved radi-

29. In the Han this was given to Court Gentlemen who stayed overnight on the ministry.

30. After the fall of the Qin, the Count of Dongling (Shaoping) had a melon patch outside the east gate of Chang'an.

31. Ban Chao (32–102) was a Han scholar who famously threw down his scholar's brush in frustration and joined the army, eventually becoming a famous general.

32. It also recalls the early seventh-century recluse Wang Ji, identified with the phrase "East Floodplain."

cally away from earlier lyric traditions grounded in performance, but something that could not be done in classical poetry. Chao Buzhi's lyrics, on the other hand, were often the very stuff of classical poetry, fused perfectly with the rhythms of the lyric genre. The following is another on "Lodging at East Floodplain," this one to "Huang yinger" 黃鶯兒.³³

南園佳致偏宜暑。兩兩三三修竹，新篁新出初齊，猗猗過簷侵戶。
聽亂颭芰荷風，細灑梧桐雨。午餘簾影參差，遠林蟬聲，幽夢殘處。
凝佇。既往盡成空，暫遇何曾住。
算人間事、豈足追思，依依夢中情緒。觀數點茗浮花，一縷香縈炷。
怪來人道陶潛，做得羲皇侶。

The sublime mood of my south garden is just right for hot weather.
Tall bamboo in twos and threes,
new canes just coming out, at first level with each other.
Lithe and lovely, they pass the eaves and get in windows.
I listen to the random rustling of breeze in water-caltrops and lotus,
and the spattering of fine rain on the tung trees.
Just after noon, an irregular tangle of shadows on the curtains,
the sounds of cicadas in distant forests,
as my private dream fades away.
I stand long without moving.
What is over and done with has all become nothing,
when did the chance encounter of the moment ever last?
And I reckon that what happens in this mortal world
is hardly worth remembering,
blurred feelings in a dream.
I watch several specks of floating sparkles in my tea,
a thread of incense coiling around the candle.
No wonder that people think Tao Qian
was the ilk of old Fuxi.³⁴

This hot-weather garden scene bears comparison to Zhou Bangyan's roughly contemporary "Gepu lian jin pai."³⁵ The descriptive opening

33. Tang Guizhang 1999, 715; Liu and Yang, 22.

34. Fuxi was one of the legendary rulers of remote antiquity, when life was simple and free of cares. Tao Qian himself had said that he felt like a person of Fuxi's time.

35. See Chapter 12, "Zhou Bangyan."

stanza had a history going back to Liu Yong, but the range of mood in such scenes was expanding. In contrast to Zhou Bangyan's far stranger second stanza, Chao Buzhi concludes with a long meditation, perfectly phrased, whose aesthetic triumph is in the juxtaposition of past feelings as if in a dream and sparkling bubbles in his tea, the drink that brings intense awareness and wakens him from his dreaminess.

With the exception of Li Zhiyi, members of Su Shi's network were bound to their own community. Chao Buzhi often wrote lyrics for his uncle Chu Duanli, but otherwise the network was foremost in his attention. He has a lyric on Huang Tingjian's death and one on Qin Guan's death in 1100 to "Qianqiu sui" 千秋歲, the second stanza of which goes like this:³⁶

灑涕誰能會。醉臥藤陰蓋。人已去，詞空在。
兔園高宴悄，虎觀英遊改。重感慨，驚濤自卷珠沈海。

Who can understand my sprinkling of tears?
I lie down drunk, covered by rattan shade.
The person is gone,
his lyrics survive without him.
The grand banquets in Rabbit Garden are silent,³⁷
splendid visits to White Tiger Lodge have changed.³⁸
I am stirred to deep turmoil of the heart,
surging billows have rolled over,
and the pearl is lost in the sea.

Like Huang Tingjian, Chao also wrote amorous monologues in the vernacular.

Chao Buzhi's lyrics survive in traced copies of one of the two Song editions, the *Chaoshi qinqu waipian* 晁氏琴趣外篇. We don't know the degree to which this preserves any authorial order, but it has an interesting feature in that the lyrics concerning women have been placed toward the back of the collection.

36. Tang Guizhang 1999, 724.

37. Referring to the gathering of Han writers at the Rabbit Park of the Prince of Liang in the Western Han.

38. A place where Eastern Han scholars gathered to debate the Classics.

Li Zhiyi

While Li Zhiyi is one of the most important critics of song lyrics, his value as a lyricist in his own right has rarely been recognized.³⁹ He does not get many comments in later “remarks on song lyric,” and while his collected lyrics were part of the Southern Song *Baijia ci*, they were not included in the early Ming version by Wu Ne. There were, however, several Ming editions.

The modern scholar Tao Erfu devotes attention to him as one of the most loyal followers of Su Shi. While he escaped the initial purges at the end of the Yuanyou reign, he was the victim of the even more vitriolic attack on Su Shi's followers in Huizong's reign, when he was thrown into the Censorate prison and flogged.⁴⁰ If he is a fine lyricist in the context of the persecutions, he is no less a fine lyricist in other venues.

To “Zhegu tian”⁴¹

收盡微風不見江。分明天水共澄光。
由來好處輸閑地，堪歎人生有底忙。
心既遠，味偏長。須知粗布勝無裳。
從今認得歸田樂，何必桃源是故鄉。

The faint breeze completely withdrawn, I do not see the river,
Clearly before me, water and sky share pure light.
Always do the finest spots yield to sites of idleness,
I sigh, wondering why human life is so busy.

The mind being far away,
its flavor is particularly long-lasting.
I finally understand that coarse cloth is better than no clothes at all.
From now on I recognize the joys of returning to my fields,
Why need Peach Blossom Spring be one's original home?

39. Tao Erfu 2005 (363ff) is one of the few scholars to give Li Zhiyi his due as a lyricist.

40. The offense was something he had written for Fan Chunren, Fan Zhongyan's son and the person who did the first collection of Yan Jidao's lyrics.

41. Tang Guizhang 1999, 447. Used in Tao Erfu 2005, 369–70.

Li Zhiyi deserves a better fate than he has received. The ripples caused by the breeze articulate the river, but once the ripples subside, there is only light. The image is beautifully linked to general human rippling "business," with idleness as the still surface that creates a world of light.

The breadth of the network extends to numerous other figures, who not only wrote lyrics but also contributed anecdotes, judgments, and colophons that catalyzed the explosion of material on the Su Shi circle in the Southern Song. I have earlier mentioned Zhao Lingzhi and his miscellany *Houqing lu*, written after the fall of the Northern Song, a valuable document by a member of the Su Shi circle and the primary source for the remains of Chao Buzhi's evaluations of eleventh-century lyricists. Like Shu Dan, most of Zhao Lingzhi's lyrics have been preserved thanks to *Yuefu yaci*. Zhao Lingzhi is, however, best known for one of the earliest examples of song fused with story, a set of lyrics to "Die lianhua" inserted into the text of Yuan Zhen's 元稹 (779–831) "Yingying's Story" 鶯鶯傳.⁴²

42. Tang Guizhang 1999, 633–37. These are included in *Houqing lu*.

TEN

Qin Guan

A discussion of Qin Guan 秦觀 (1049–1100) bears a particular burden because his life coincides with the moment when “song lyric proper” began, in terms of how the genre was appraised until the new literary history of the Republican era, where Qin Guan appears well into a long history of song lyric. For aficionados of song lyric there was considerable interest in and celebration of the earlier history of the genre, both in the Tang and Five Dynasties, as well as the mid-eleventh century; but Qin Guan on one side and Su Shi on another seemed to begin the genre as a fully “literary” form.

He Zhu (1052–1125) was only three years younger than Qin Guan, and his lyrics were widely appreciated at the same time; but having had the good fortune to outlive Qin Guan by a quarter of a century, he seemed somehow more of a “later” lyricist. He Zhu outlived even Zhou Bangyan (1056–1121), who was only seven years younger than Qin Guan, but in a regime of chronological imagination, Zhou Bangyan seemed to belong to a later generation—perhaps because acclaim for his work came later. Despite their good fortune of being alive several additional decades for He Zhu and Zhou Bangyan, all three were engaged in a major literary transformation of the genre at roughly the same time—the last quarter of the eleventh century—and they left a permanent mark on it.

Qin Guan had the advantage of belonging to the charmed circle around Su Shi, and he received his share of attention in the remarkable production of anecdotes that began during the lifetimes of members of the circle and continued for more than a century. By contrast, anecdotes about He Zhu and Zhou Bangyan are far fewer. The loves of Zhou Bangyan were (with one famous exception) not a matter of great interest, but Qin Guan was provided with a delightfully rich love life.

As in classical poetry, anecdote in song lyric usually means "the real story behind the lyric" (*benshi ci*). In the case of Su Shi, while many such anecdotes are clearly apocryphal, the lyricist himself continually made references to details of the circumstances of composition—in occasional titles, prefaces, and in the texts themselves. This invited supplementation in anecdotes and the provision of anecdotes when such details were lacking.

However much Su Shi admired him, Qin Guan was a different kind of lyricist. Qin Guan was writing "song lyric proper" and did not often supply details of compositional circumstance in occasional titles or prefaces; nor did he generally refer to specific places or people in the texts. Nevertheless, he too attracted numerous anecdotes about the compositional circumstances of particular lyrics. As Su Shi's usually did not, his lyrics also attracted a substantial body of critical comment about phrasing and usage, sometimes in anecdotes and sometimes not. The insatiable biographical impulse in the Chinese critical tradition may identify a poetic phrase such as "emerald peach" (*bitao* 碧桃) as a proper name or a play on a proper name, and tell a good story; ever thereafter it becomes almost impossible to read the lyric without thinking of the "named" person and the story of the lyricist's interaction with Emerald Peach. This is in no way implausible, since singers *were* given such names and lyricists did indeed play on such names. We simply do not and cannot ever know if this is the case in most instances. The anecdote may fit the lyric *almost* perfectly; but we can never know if that is because the anecdote is true or because the anecdote has been shaped to explain the lyric.

Emerald peaches, which refer to the immortal peach tree of the Queen Mother of the West and to a particular variety of non-fruiting peach in the mortal world, indeed make their appearance in a Qin Guan

lyric to "Yu meiren." Emerald Peach, as the name of a singer, appears in what is probably a very late Song collection of romantic anecdotes, *New Tales by the Green Window* (*Lüchuang xinhua* 綠窗新話).¹

碧桃天上栽和露，不是凡花數。
亂山深處水濛回，可惜一枝如畫、為誰開。
輕寒細雨情何限，不道春難管。
為君沈醉又何妨，只怕酒醒時候、斷人腸。

Up in heaven the emerald peach is planted with dew,
it is not to be counted among ordinary flowers.
In the deepest spots in tangled mountains,
waters wind around,
to be cherished, a single branch like a painting,
blossoming for whom?

Light cold, faint rain, feelings without limit,
It hadn't realized that spring couldn't take care of it.
What's to prevent me from getting completely drunk for you?
I just fear that when I sober from the ale,
it will break my heart.

The first line was taken verbatim from a quatrain by the Late Tang poet Gao Chan 高蟾, on failing the examination.² This is the emerald peach of legend, figuratively referring to those who pass the examination and enjoy the benefice of the court. The thirteenth-century anecdote supplied for Qin Guan's song lyric makes it a reference to a domestic singer.³

Qin Guan was staying in the capital, and there was a noble official who held a drinking party. He had his darling singer Emerald Peach come out to serve drinks. She urged on the ale with a look of yearning. Qin Guan understood what was on her mind, and he raised his cup and urged Emerald Peach to drink. The noble official said, "Emerald Peach is not a practiced drinker"—his implication being that he did not want Qin Guan to pressure her to drink. But Emerald Peach said, "For the sake of this scholar today I will let myself go and get drunk." Then she took

1. Tang Guizhang 1999, 601; Xu Peijun 1985, 132.

2. QTs 36939.

3. Xu Peijun 1985, 133.

a huge flagon and took a long draft. Qin Guan immediately composed a lyric to "Yu meiren" for her, which went, "[...]." Every one of the guests was repelled. Then the noble official said, "From now on I'm never going to have this wench make an appearance"; and the whole party broke into loud laughter.

Here, of course, Emerald Peach becomes the speaker in the second stanza, overcome with desire for the famous lyricist and lover, Qin Guan. The italicized line in the second stanza requires some ingenuity to fit into the story: one modern commentary, believing the anecdote is indeed the actual occasion of the lyric, interprets it improbably as "forgets the prohibition of the noble official" (忘卻貴官的阻止), taking *guan* 管 in one of its common modern senses.⁴

Without the improbable anecdote and a singer named Emerald Peach, we have a very different lyric, contrasting the emerald peach of the immortal world with its mortal counterpart blossoming in the mountains. It blossoms without realizing that spring will not care for it. The lyricist himself wants to lose himself in drunkenness, but knows that by the time he sobers up, its petals will have fallen in the light rain and its transient beauty will be gone. This is, of course, far less entertaining than the inventive anecdote, but it is the stylized discourse of sensibility that increasingly characterized "song lyric proper." The association between a young woman and a flower is still there, but the anticipation of loss and parting has become categorical and invested in the instance of the flowering peach.

This discourse of sensibility in song lyric was something Su Shi could not abide, especially when it came to a current lyric on willow catkins (flowers) by one Zhang Jie 章棨, supposedly popular at that time. In one of his most famous lyrics, to "Shuilong yin" 水龍吟, Su Shi matched the rhymes of that lyric, at first resisting the discourse of sensibility but succumbing to it in the end. The lyric depends on the two predominant associations of willows: parting (because willow twigs were snapped on parting) and courtesans.⁵

4. Xu Peijun 2003, 267.

5. Tang Guizhang 1999, 358; Zou and Wang, 314.

似花還似非花，也無人惜從教墜。拋家傍路，思量卻是，無情有思。
 縈損柔腸，困酣嬌眼，欲開還閉。
 夢隨風萬里，尋郎去處，又還被、鶯呼起。
 不恨此花飛盡，恨西園、落紅難綴。曉來雨過，遺蹤何在，
 一池萍碎。
 春色三分，二分塵土，一分流水。
 細看來，不是楊花點點，是離人淚。

They're like flowers, but then again not like flowers,
 and no one feels bad letting them fall.
 They leave home for the roadside,
 and if you think about it, you'll find
 they have no feelings, but do have longings.⁶
 Their tender guts wind around and are ruined,
 their charming eyes queasy from drink
 are about to open, then close again.
 In dream they go thousands of leagues with the breeze,
 seeking where their lovers have gone,
 then again they are called awake by the orioles.
 It doesn't bother me that these flowers all fly loose,
 what bothers me is that in west garden
 fallen red petals cannot be reattached.
 A rain shower passed at dawn,
 where are their last traces?—
 a whole pool of duckweed shattered.
 Divide spring's beauty in three parts:
 two parts are dust and dirt,
 one part is flowing water.
 If you look closely,
 these are not specks of willow flowers,
 they are the tears of people parted.

While Su Shi resists the conventional lyric discourse of sensibility, he sought a language of feeling in other, unconventional ways.

We have earlier discussed the problematic opposition between the "tender" style (*wanyue*), represented by Qin Guan, and the "brash" style (*haofang*), associated with Su Shi and his epigones. We have to think

6. "Longings" (*si* 思) puns on "filaments" (*si* 絲).

about song lyric differently, including both the styles that fit neither category and the category *wanyue* itself, because it not only comprised the vast majority of song lyrics but also encompassed too many distinct poetic interests to be reduced to one thing.

Sometimes a foreign term is useful to reorder habitual Chinese categories, especially those that remain tenacious, however much scholars recognize that they are anachronistic and flawed. The basic problem with the opposition between *wanyue* and *haofang* is that they belong *only* to the world of song lyric. As self-sufficient opposites they occlude the possibility that song lyric was developing in relation to other forces in Song culture, and that song lyric's explicit and implicit claim to be a separate sphere is itself a function of the world outside that sphere.

Let me return to consider a loaded English term (with West European cognates) that I have here used. It might be useful to think of song lyric as a discourse of "sensibility," evoking the usage of that term in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Like song lyric it was a discourse of fine feelings and delicacy, a discourse with a strong association with femininity, but a ground that could be shared by men and women alike. Its mannerisms and excesses can be understood in the context of a larger intellectual climate valuing reason, practicality, and a strong sense of moral restraint. That opposition gives us Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.

Cross-cultural comparisons are always perilous, but they can have useful heuristic insights. The song lyric discourse of "sensibility" was based on a rejection of dominant cultural values, creating small worlds that refused to ask the questions circulating in larger society. Perhaps Su Shi's sin and attraction was not his *haofang* ("brashness") but his contamination of the militantly enclosed "small world" of song lyric with modes of discourse and questions that the practitioners of song lyric wanted to keep outside.

The *actual* world of song lyric was far more complex. In the second half of the eleventh century there were more and more "new lyrics" for parties, celebrating a parting governor's new post or wishing happy birthday to some grandee. Most of these have been mercifully lost, but enough survive to remind us that song lyric had fully entered the social commerce of officialdom. While those figures competent to turn out a

passable song lyric were no doubt employed to contribute to such occasions, we need to recall that parties, with their drinking rituals, still needed many songs. After a few new happy birthday lyrics were sung, the party probably did not continue with a string of happy birthday lyrics to other grantees from preceding months and years. The world of song lyric continued.

However crude the categories and however profound the differences from the European case, the larger Song cultural world that somehow contained song lyric was in its own way rational, practical, and philosophically moralistic. Each of these dispositions—individually and in various combinations—claimed to be universal and all-important. It was a world that could not but provoke a counter-move: the creation of a closed discursive sphere in which nothing outside that sphere mattered.

If song lyric was often just such a discourse of sensibility—love, loss, memories, melancholy, appreciation of tea and plum blossoms—it was usually a separate sphere within a larger public life, sometimes explicitly rejecting the world of official schedules and “things too far.” A few seem to have tried to live in that discourse, but for most it was an alternative sphere that they could enter on occasion and leave when necessary. They struggled to pass the examination, were dispatched from post to post, and tried to be good officials. If an associate got into political trouble or if their faction was purged, they could be sent to exceedingly unpleasant locales—as Qin Guan finally was. In song lyric, however, nothing outside its world was supposed to matter, and the fascination the genre held was understandable.

Understood in this sense, song lyric’s unity was negative. It was an attempt to speak all the possible ways that human experience does not belong to the public world or the rational world or the conventionally moralistic world. This allows us to understand the variety of very different values—the different kinds of “good”—at play within “song lyric proper,” and it allows a space for Su Shi’s lyrics as a singular possibility, rather than an opposition.

Qin Guan’s lyrics were very popular in the Southern Song. We know of four separate editions of the lyrics alone, none extant; but the lyrics were included in his collected works of 1173. All current versions of the lyrics

are based on a reissue of his collected works in 1192. The core collection is a remarkably slim volume of 77 lyrics, which Tang Guizhang's judgment in the *Quan Song ci* has extended to 87. As might be expected, these are accompanied by a sizable corpus of attributed lyrics.

Here we might turn to what was probably Qin Guan's most celebrated lyric, which, through anecdotes, became caught up in the issues surrounding song lyric that surfaced perhaps in the late eleventh century, but certainly in the twelfth. Let us begin with the lyric itself, to "Man ting fang," dated to 1079 on no secure grounds.⁷

山抹微雲，天黏衰草，畫角聲斷譙門。暫停征棹，聊共引離尊。
多少蓬萊舊事，空回首、煙靄紛紛。斜陽外，寒鴉數點，流水繞孤村。
銷魂，當此際，香囊暗解，羅帶輕分。謾贏得青樓、薄倖名存。
此去何時見也，襟袖上、空染啼痕。傷情處，高城望斷，燈火已黃昏。

Mountains daubed with faint clouds,
the heavens pasted with withering plants,
a painted horn's sound breaks off from the watch-tower gate.
For a while I rest my journeying oars,
and for the moment we keep on with parting cups.
So much that happened before at Penglai!—⁸
I look back uselessly,
 mist and haze everywhere.
Beyond the setting sunbeams
several specks of wintry crows,
the flowing water circles a solitary village.
It melts the heart,
at a moment such as this,
the perfumed sachet secretly untied,
casually parting from the gossamer sash.
In the blue houses I won nothing from this
but the enduring repute of a man of no feeling.
Going off from here, when will I see her?—
on my sleeves and gown's folds
 the vain stains of weeping.
The place that most wounds the heart:

7. Tang Guizhang 1999, 589; Xu Peijun 1985, 36.

8. The isle of the immortals, here standing for an idyllic place and circumstances.

gazing as far as I can see from the high wall,
lamp-fires in the dusk.

The famous anecdote closely attached to this lyric comes from a note to a Su Shi lyric in the *Hua'an cixuan* 花庵詞選, published in 1249, over a century and a half after the events it narrates. Returning to the capital after visiting Kuaiji (presumably in 1079), Qin Guan met with Su Shi (who that year, in fact, spent his time in the capital in the Censorate prison under a possible death sentence, and thereafter was immediately banished to Huangzhou). In this wildly apocryphal anecdote, Su Shi notes that his lyric beginning "Mountains daubed with faint clouds" was popular in the capital. Then Su Shi is quoted as saying: "I did not expect that after we parted you would be imitating the lyrics of Liu Yong." Qin Guan replies, "I may be ignorant, but I would never go that far. Isn't what you are saying excessive?" Su Shi responds, "It melts the heart, / at a moment such as this'—isn't that the syntactic style of Liu Yong?" The anecdote concludes, "Qin shamefacedly accepted the judgment; however, it was already in circulation, and couldn't be revised."⁹

The value of this anecdote is clearly not in its historical credibility. Like many such anecdotes about song lyric, it is a lesson about what is acceptable and what is unacceptable. Su Shi, ever the opponent of sentimentality, is invoked as the authority figure who picks out two overtly sentimental lines from Qin Guan's work. Qin Guan is represented as being embarrassed and accepting Su's judgment. It is important to recognize that in the Southern Song Qin Guan was, with Zhou Bangyan, the preeminent representative of Northern Song song lyric (Su Shi being a special case), while Liu Yong was seen as a flawed early practitioner (a situation very different from the one that prevailed when Qin Guan's lyric was composed, when Liu Yong was really the only representative of *manci* of an earlier generation).

Reading it from the time of Qin Guan, this lyric indeed has striking similarities to Liu Yong's travel lyrics, with one stanza on the scene at hand and one stanza bemoaning the beloved left behind. It is following

9. Xu Peijun 1985, 38–39.

Liu Yong. To choose the two lines Su Shi supposedly selected as blameworthy is another way of saying that everything else in the lyric had been so well assimilated and transformed by Qin Guan that it no longer sounded like Liu Yong—only the two lines of explicit sentiment remained as a flaw to be noted and shamefacedly acknowledged by the lyricist himself.

The question is, then, what has Qin Guan done with a characteristic Liu Yong travel lyric to make it his own and hide his traces, to make himself rather than Liu Yong the ancestor of the mainstream of song lyric later in the Song? When we phrase the question this way, it is hard not to notice the celebrated opening line: "Mountains daubed with faint clouds" (山抹微雲). Here a single word, *mo* 抹, is praised as the aesthetic triumph of the line. *Mo* is a term commonly used in applying cosmetics, to "daub" or "to spread over," as well as a painting technique, a "wash" in which one color of ink covers shapes done in another color, blurring them, making the contrasts and the edges of color areas softer. First, we should observe that this word *mo*, whose transferred usage makes the line admired for its artfulness, was itself a term of artful adornment: it appropriates natural scenes, such as the visual appearance of light clouds over the mountains, as an act of deliberate craft. Second, we should observe that *mo* is precisely a term of covering over, blurring what is too sharp, and casting a poetic "haze" over the landscape. And insofar as mountains are conventionally figured as a woman's eyebrows, *mo* is the right verb for painting them.

Liu Yong created the voice of male passion, expressing his own emotions as directly as women singers had been made to do in Dunhuang songs and in his own songs. Such directness spilled over into the way he represented other things, including landscapes. Qin Guan runs an ink wash over a Liu Yong landscape, and Su Shi praises the wash, but embarrasses Qin by pointing out a few short lines of direct emotion not yet blurred, washed over—a break in the clouds. But unfortunately the lyric was already in circulation and he could not erase it.

As the poem begins, all of a sudden there is the sound of a horn breaking off, a signal of evening, at which point the traveler, too, pauses before his journey. The diction is carefully chosen, coded as "poetic." Even the relaxed diction of the line on drinking is poetically centered in

the usage *yin* 引 (to “draw on” or to “keep on” the cups), authorized by a precedent line in Du Fu, marking the line as “high.”¹⁰ The only way to fully appreciate that line is to already know the precedent text.

As the *ci* evolved historically through the eleventh century and as it rose in literary status, images of presence became increasingly displaced. Su Shi dreamed of being in a boat and looking at a building in the distance where someone else was holding a party. But when Qin Guan thinks back on what happened before (*jiu shi* 舊事), he gets only: “I look back uselessly, mist and haze everywhere” (空回首、煙靄紛紛). More and more layers of wash or fog have been added; one can no longer even say, as Ouyang Xiu did, “the mountain’s color, between being there and not” (山色有無中), the color space of the mountain is between being there and not being there. Now there is only fog.

The first stanza ends in a high “poetic” image, with lines put in multiple quotation marks. Everything Qin Guan claims as experience is explicitly mediated by codes of artfulness, by poetic images and poetic diction recognized as such. Of course, all representations are ultimately mediated: what is significant is the relative explicitness of the marking of mediation.

At the stanza transition there is often an inward turn: one imagines, one recalls, one feels pain. Qin Guan slips into pure Liu Yong, and Su Shi catches him out. Zhou Bangyan will rarely make that mistake. The second stanza is a struggle between the Liu Yong model and the new “literary” *man*ci announced in the first stanza. In line 15 the literary archive reasserts itself in a remarkably pleonastic line, literally “In the blue houses in vain I won nothing from this but the enduring reputé of a man of no feeling” (謾贏得青樓、薄倖名存). This embeds one of Du Mu’s most famous lines. The framing words *man* 謾 (“in vain”) and *cun* 存 (“enduring”) are unnecessary. The *man* was already implicit in Du Mu’s Tang colloquial ironic usage of *yingde* 贏得, “[all] I won” (“all I got myself”). Likewise the *cun* is also already implicit in the *de*, though more than *man* it can be justified as an emphatic. These are introduced in the line, not only because of spaces to be filled in the tune pattern, but also because the old line of classical poetry is no longer just the meaning of

10. QTs 10926.

its individual words: it has become "a line of poetry." The added words mark the present poetic act of "quoting" in a new idiom.

After slipping back into Liu Yong's diction for a few lines, the high "poetic" wins out in the final lines, displacing the beloved behind the walls of the city and the walls of the city out of sight. The closing is an aesthetic triumph of sorts: it is the inversion of the closing image of the first stanza, where we see dots of black crows against the brightness of the setting sun. Here we have instead the photographic "negative," a darkening backdrop in which the lanterns are dots of light, replacing the dots of blackness that were the crows.

Probably a century before the anecdote in *Hua'an cixuan*, Yan Youyi's 嚴有翼 critical work *Yiyuan cihuang* 藝苑雌黃 offers another comment:¹¹

其詞極為東坡所稱道，取其首句，呼之為山抹微雲君。中間有『寒鴉萬點，流水繞孤村』之句，人皆以為少游自造此語，殊不知亦有所本；予在臨安，見平江梅知錄云：『隋煬帝詩云：寒鴉千萬點，流水繞孤村。少游用此語也。』

The lyric was much praised by Su Dongpo, and taking the first line, he called Qin "Mister Mountains-Daubed-With-Faint-Clouds." In it were the lines: "Several specks of wintry crows, / the flowing water circles a solitary village." Everyone thought that Qin Guan himself had created these words, not realizing that this too had a source. I was in Lin'an and was told by Mei Zhilu of Pingjiang: "A Sui Yangdi poem says, 'Thousands of specks of wintry crows, / the flowing water circles a solitary village.' Qin Guan used these words."

This was the age of Jiangxi poetics, when every line *should* have an earlier source, transformed in reuse. No early source has this couplet among Sui Yangdi's works and fragments. It is not impossible, but most unlikely, that a new Sui Yangdi poem would have resurfaced in the twelfth century, revealing the true source of lines of one of the then most famous song lyrics. Recognizing such an obscure source was a mark of prestige. It is quite possible that Qin Guan was provided with a twelfth-century

11. Xu Peijun 1985, 39, quoted in Hu Zi's *Tiaoxi yuyin conghua houji*. Nothing is known of Yan Youyi except that he held offices in the Shaoxing reign (1131–62).

couplet supposedly by a seventh-century author, lending credit both to Qin Guan and to the scholar who recognized it.¹²

The anecdote suggests the forces at work in literary song lyric. This lyric's "artfulness" is as much a creation of its readers as of Qin Guan himself.

The other force at work is anecdotal framing, discussed earlier. *Yiyuan cihuang* has another entry telling "the real story" behind the lyric, an anecdote that accounts for its current dating. When Qin Guan was in Kuaiji until mid-summer of 1079, he supposedly fell in love with a singer, which was supposed to account for the line: "So much that happened before at Penglai!— / I look back uselessly, mist and haze everywhere." The anecdote claims he wrote the lyric in Kuaiji, ignoring the explicitly retrospective stance of the lines. Xu Peijun repairs this lapse by dating the poem to his subsequent visit to Yue, thinking back on the girl at Kuaiji, making a more appropriate seasonal setting for "withering plants" and "wintry crows."¹³

In short, we have nine centuries of admiring readers trying to provide Qin Guan's lyric with a referential, biographical ground and to fill in sources for "poetic lines" that have no obvious sources. Song lyric is no longer "just a song."

In a system of changing fashion, as song lyric was, the style popular when one was a youth has a particular influence. This was clearly true of Yan Jidao, for whom the *xiaoling* world of his father's considerable establishment represented the kind of song lyric on which his later work was based. We might recall the colophon to the lyrics of Liu Yong by Huang Chang, to whom Liu Yong's lyrics seemed to embody the peace and prosperity of the Jiayou reign (1056–64). Huang Chang was only five years older than Qin Guan, and was clearly thinking back nostalgically to his own youth. If there is truth in Su Shi's often quoted criticism of Qin Guan for sounding like Liu Yong, it is likely that Qin Guan's lyric

12. These lines attributed to Yangdi appear with two others in the Ming miscellany *Bizhu* 筆塵, the source cited by Lu Qinli. Xu 38 claims that Lu is citing the early Southern Song *Tieweishan congkan* 鐵圍山叢談, but that is not in the standard edition of Lu, nor are the lines to be found in that miscellany.

13. Xu Peijun 1985, 37.

style grew out of a youthful familiarity with Liu Yong, which was to work itself out not simply in an engagement with Liu Yong's love lyrics but with Liu Yong's most striking lyrics as a whole.

Praise of Bianjing was common, especially in lyrics celebrating imperial occasions. Liu Yong, however, was perhaps the first to use song lyric to celebrate the Song dynasty's other great cities, as in his famous lyric on Hangzhou, perhaps composed around 1053, to the tune "Wang hai chao" 望海潮, "Gazing on the Tidal Bore," about the tidal bore on the Qiantang River, just south of Hangzhou.¹⁴

東南形勝，三吳都會，錢塘自古繁華。
煙柳畫橋，風簾翠幕，參差十萬人家。雲樹繞堤沙。
怒濤卷霜雪，天塹無涯。市列珠璣，戶盈羅綺競豪奢。
重湖疊巘清嘉。有三秋桂子，十里荷花。
羌管弄晴，菱歌泛夜，嬉嬉釣叟蓮娃。千騎擁高牙。
乘醉聽簫鼓，吟賞煙霞。異日圖將好景，歸去鳳池誇。

Prime spot of splendor in the southeast,
the hub of the three parts of Wu,
Qiantang, glorious from ancient days.¹⁵
Misty willows, painted bridges,
breeze-blown curtains, kingfisher drapes,
a hundred thousand families scattered around.
Trees in cloud encircle its sandy causeways.¹⁶
Raging billows churn frost and snow,¹⁷
and "Nature's Moat" is boundless.¹⁸
In its markets are rows of pearls,
its doors are filled with silks and satins
in a contest of extravagance.¹⁹
Layers of lakes, folds of high hills, fresh and fine.
There are cinnamon seeds in late autumn
and ten leagues of lotus.
Tibetan flutes play in clear skies,

14. Tang Guizhang 1999, 50; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 169.

15. Qiantang refers to Hangzhou.

16. The embankments that cut across West Lake.

17. The Qiantang tidal bore.

18. Usually the Yangzi River, but here perhaps the Qiantang.

19. Beautiful women in their finery.

water-chestnut songs drift through the nights,
 making merry, old fishermen and lotus-picking lasses.
 Ten thousand riders holding high banners.
 In drunkenness listen to the pipes and drums,
 chant poems, enjoy mist and rosy wisps.
 In days to come plan to take this fine scene
 and return to boast of it at the Phoenix Pool [Secretariat].

Such a lyric takes the place of the old poetic expositions on cities in offering pure praise. As suggested in the discussion on Liu Yong, it is advertising, stirring people's desire to go there and enjoy such pleasures. When Qin Guan visited Yangzhou in 1080, he significantly chose the tune "Wang hai chao" to praise that city in what seems to have been a clear gesture to the precedent of Liu Yong. It is worth noting that Liu Yong's lyric is the earliest extant version of that tune title and would have been composed specifically for that lyric. While there is one undatable version by Qin Guan's contemporary Chao Duanli 晁端禮, it is quite different. Chao Duanli's relative Chao Buzhi has a version dated to 1091-92, and its topic too is Yangzhou (on a party to celebrate peonies). The following lyric is Qin Guan's praise of Yangzhou.²⁰

星分牛斗，疆連淮海，揚州萬井提封。
 花發路香，鶯啼人起，珠簾十里東風。豪俊氣如虹。
 曳照春金紫，飛蓋相從。巷入垂楊，畫橋南北翠煙中。
 追思故國繁雄。有迷樓掛斗，月觀橫空。
 紋錦制帆，明珠濺雨，寧論爵馬魚龍。往事逐孤鴻。
 但亂雲流水，縈帶離宮。最好揮毫萬字，一飲拚千鐘。

Under stars' division, between Oxherd and Dipper,
 its boundaries reach from the Huai to the sea,
 Yangzhou's full borders enclose ten thousand wells.²¹
 The roads smell sweet when the flowers come out,
 orioles sing and people rise,
 beaded curtains, ten leagues of spring breeze.
 Bold and brilliant, auras like rainbows.

20. Tang Guizhang 1999, 585; Xu Peijun 1985, 1.

21. A "well" is a measure for a neighborhood, notionally consisting of eight households.

Decked in purple and gold shining in spring,²²
 flying carriage canopies one after another.
 The lanes enter weeping willows,
 in azure mist north and south of the painted bridge.
 I think back on the old capital with its power and splendor.
 There was the Labyrinth on which the Dipper hung,
 and Moon Lodge stretching across the void.²³
 They fashioned sails of patterned brocade
 and sprinkled a rain of bright pearls.²⁴
 One scarcely need mention his amusements,
 "sparrow and horse," "fish or dragon."²⁵
 What happened in the past has gone off with the lone swan.
 There is only a tangle of clouds and flowing water,
 a swathe encircling his palace lodgings there.
 Best, ten thousand words as I flourish my brush,
 and drown myself in ten thousand goblets in one sitting.

Qin Guan closes with a reworking of a couplet from Ouyang Xiu's "Chaozhong cuo":

揮毫萬字，一飲千鍾。

ten thousand words as he flourishes his brush,
 a thousand cups downed at one sitting.

This is the obvious allusion, aligning himself with the literati *xiaoling* to close a lyric studded with references to Tang poems, rather than sounding like Liu Yong. But the telltale mark of Liu Yong, though less obvious, is there. Not only is the tune title the same, but Qin Guan uses the opening *you* 有 ("there is") in the second line of the second stanza as Liu Yong does. It is not a reference; it is simply having another analogous lyric to the same tune in mind as one composes.

22. Purple sashes and gold seals, the marks of high officers of state.

23. Both were built by Sui Yangdi, who made Yangzhou his River Capital and moved the seat of government there.

24. This line refers to two anecdotes of Sui Yangdi's extravagance, first that he used tribute brocade to make sails for his barges on the Grand Canal, and second, that he had palace ladies strew pearls on the imperial barge to imitate the sound of rain.

25. Anachronistic terms for imperial games.

Qin Guan's first stanza is purely descriptive praise of the city, without a hint of "meditation on the past" (*huaigu* 懷古). Su Shi's famous lyric to "Niannu jiao," "Meditation on the Past at Red Cliff," was not composed until 1082, but, as we have seen, that too has precedent in Liu Yong. Liu Yong's Hangzhou was then less fraught with history than Yangzhou—or Kuaiji, on which Qin had written another "Wang hai chao" a year earlier in 1079.

"Literary" Transformation: The Fisherman's Song

In contrast to Su Shi, who added genuinely new topics to song lyric, Qin Guan and his contemporaries working in "song lyric proper" by and large took received thematic material and transformed it, sometimes almost beyond recognition. We see the phases of love elaborated in Liu Yong and *xiaoling*: the first sight, tenderness in the bedroom, parting, watching the flowers fall, love-longing, reencountering or revisiting a place where the lyricist had earlier been with the beloved, parties and festivities in cities great and small, losing oneself in drunkenness and finding oneself too old to enjoy the party. The tea lyric, often contrasted with drinking ale, was a new topic, but the consumption of tea too was sometimes celebrated in the company of beautiful women. Together such moments created a sphere of experience outside of public life and what Qin Guan called "the bridle of renown and the chains of gain" (名韁利鎖).²⁶ There was, however, another old topic of song lyric, hard to circumscribe within the bounds of "tenderness" (*wanyue*), but militantly positioning itself against the claims of public life: this was the "fisherman's song," and it was shared by Su Shi as well as the mainstream of song lyric.

The fisherman was part of the cultural imaginary of the Southland, Jiangnan, conjoined with beautiful girls picking lotuses or washing silk beside a stream, with travelers from other regions flirting with them or lying adrift in a boat, never wanting to go home. Such an idyll of the

26. To "Shui long yin," Tang Guizhang 1999, 587; Xu Peijun 1985, 14.

Southland was often imagined from the outside. We find such songs even in dusty Dunhuang, which shared a culture with China, even if political ties were nominal once it threw off Tibetan rule in the ninth century. There is a now well-known Dunhuang lyric to "Huan xi sha":²⁷

卷卻詩書上釣船。身披蓑笠執魚竿。棹向碧波深處去，幾重灘。
不是從前為釣者。蓋緣時世厭良賢。所以將身巖藪下。不朝天。

I roll up my poems and books
and get in a fishing boat.
I put on straw raincoat and fishing hat,
a fishing rod in my hand.
I row off toward the emerald waves,
away to the deepest spots,
past so many rapids.
I am not one of those in the past
who just pretended to fish.
It is all because these times
despise men of worth and virtue.
For this reason I take myself
to the marshes and the cliffs
and will not go to court.

The negative move at the end of the Dunhuang lyric is found in all five of the verses entitled "Fisherman" 漁父 attributed to Zhang Zhihe 張志和 (aka Xuanzhenzi 玄真子, "Master of Mysterious Authenticity," 730–810). The following are the closing lines of each of the five:²⁸

斜風細雨不須歸

In the slanting wind and fine rain he need *not* ever return.

長江白浪不曾憂

At whitecaps on the long river he does *not* ever worry.

笑著荷衣不歎窮

Laughing, he wears a garment of lotus and does *not* sigh at his poverty,

27. Ren Bantang 1987, 409.

28. Zeng Zhaomin, 25ff.

醉宿漁舟不覺寒

Drunk, he spends the night on the fishing boat and is *not* aware of the cold.

樂在風波不用仙

His joy is among the winds and waves, and *not* to become an immortal.

Although the five lyrics entitled "Fisherman" by Zhang Zhihe are now taken as some of the earliest examples of song lyric, there is no reason to suppose that they are a tune title rather than simply a title. The first of these goes:

西塞山邊白鷺飛，桃花流水鰕魚肥。
青箬笠，綠蓑衣。斜風細雨不須歸。

Beside West Barrier Mountain
white egrets are flying,
peach blossoms in flowing water,
the mandarin fish are fat.
In a pale green bamboo hat
and a dark green straw raincoat,
in the slanting wind and fine rain
he need not ever return.

In thinking of song lyric, Su Shi was one of the first figures to begin to look back to earlier lyrics, skipping over his immediate predecessors (except for Ouyang Xiu) to the Tang and Five Dynasties. He understood Zhang Zhihe's verse above as a song lyric; and regretting that the music was "lost," he "added a few words" (加數語) and rewrote it to "Huan xi sha," the same tune as the Dunhuang fisherman's song.²⁹

西塞山邊白鷺飛。散花洲外片帆微。桃花流水鰕魚肥。
自庇一身青箬笠，相隨到處綠蓑衣。斜風細雨不須歸。

Beside West Barrier Mountain
white egrets are flying.

29. Tang Guizhang 1999, 405; Zou and Wang, 370.

Past isles with scattered flowers
 a single sail, faint.
 Peach blossoms in flowing water,
 the mandarin fish are fat.
 He covers over this body
 with a pale green bamboo hat,
 going with him everywhere,
 a dark green straw raincoat.
 In the slanting wind and fine rain
 he need not ever return.

These very light versions of a fisherman's song are offered as a foil for Qin Guan's "Man ting fang." Were it not for the haunting image at the end of the first stanza, we would not realize that Qin Guan's *manci* is also a fisherman's song, reconfigured almost beyond recognition, but still with the essential components of rejecting the world.³⁰

紅蓼花繁，黃蘆葉亂，夜深玉露初零。霽天空闊，雲淡楚江清。
 獨棹孤蓬小艇，悠悠過、煙渚沙汀。金鉤細，絲綸慢卷，牽動
 一潭星。

時時，橫短笛，清風皓月，相與忘形。任人笑生涯，泛梗飄萍。
 飲罷不妨醉臥，塵勞事、有耳誰聽。江風靜，日高未起，枕上
 酒微醒。

The flowers are dense on the red lady's-finger,
 leaves of the yellow reeds in a tangle,
 deep in the night the jade-white dew begins to fall.
 The clearing skies are empty and vast,
 clouds pale, the Chu River clear.
 Alone I row my little skiff with its solitary awning
 on and on past
 misty isles and sandy shores.
 The metal hook is thin,
 the silken line slowly rolls,
 pulling into motion a poolful of stars.
 From time to time
 I hold my small flute to my lips,

30. Tang Guizhang 1999, 589; Xu Peijun 1985, 42.

clear breeze and glowing moon
 join me in forgetting myself.
 Let others laugh at life spent like this,
 a stick adrift, duckweed swept along.
 Drinking done, nothing stops me from lying down drunk,
 What goes on in the world's filth—
 I won't listen to it though I have ears.
 The breeze on the river quiets down,
 the sun is high and I haven't risen,
 on my pillow, faintly sobering up.

Qin Guan begins with his attention to the vegetation close to the shore, then reveals a night scene opening onto a vast expanse as the clouds clear away. His little boat moves along in the night, and the aficionado of song lyric would think this was a standard "travel by boat scene," until that forward motion is arrested by the tiniest, almost motionless point of a fishing line in the still water, creating faint ripples as it is reeled in, which seem to pull in the reflections of stars.³¹ The sudden shift from motion to relative stillness, from a broad scope to a single point of focus surrounded by the reflection of the larger world, is an easy allegory of the fisherman and his absorption in his own world.

We might recall Ouyang Xiu's comment on the mirroring surface of West Lake in Yingzhou, that in the lake was another heaven, another world. Here attention is focused on the line moving through the mirroring surface. Through it we enter the idyllic world of the second stanza, in which the speaker is not simply fishing but has become "the fisherman." The outside world enters negatively, as the lyricist disdains the laughter of others and refuses to "listen to" what goes on in the outside world.

31. Note that this "pool" (*tan* 潭) is not an enclosed body of water, but a space of still water that one finds when a river widens, especially around a turn.

The Seventh Eve Lyric

Qin Guan's lyric to "Que qiao xian" 鵲橋仙 on the Seventh Eve is a good example of the forces at work in the culture of song lyric toward the end of the eleventh century. The two constellations, the Oxherd and Weaver, were figured as divine lovers who were banished to positions on opposite sides of the River of Stars, the Milky Way. They were permitted to meet only once a year, on the Seventh Eve (the seventh day of the seventh lunar month), crossing a bridge formed by magpies. On this night women set out offerings, praying to the Weaver for skill in weaving.

Seventh Eve lyrics were common; but increasingly in Qin Guan's day, they suggested that the divine lovers were more fortunate than mortals. Even if they were allowed to meet only once a year, they were permitted to do so for eternity. While this had precedents, it is rarely as explicit as in Qin Guan's famous lyric.³²

纖雲弄巧，飛星傳恨，銀漢迢迢暗度。
金風玉露一相逢，便勝卻、人間無數。
柔情似水，佳期如夢，忍顧鵲橋歸路。
兩情若是久長時，又豈在、朝朝暮暮。

Fine clouds ply their skills,
a shooting star conveys resentment,
far off in the silver River of Stars she crosses unseen.
Meeting once in fall's metal wind and jade-white dew
is still better than
countless times in the mortal world.

The tender feelings are like water,
the sweet meeting is like a dream,
can she bear to look around to the road back
over the magpie bridge?
If only their love for each other can last forever,
how then would it depend on being
every morning and every evening?

32. Tang Guizhang 1999, 591; Xu Peijun 1985, 55.

We need to consider the precedent end of the first stanza in a couplet of Tang Seventh Eve poem attributed to both Zhao Huang 趙璜 and Li Ying 李郢:³³

莫嫌天上稀相見，猶勝人間去不迴。

Don't hate that up in Heaven
they meet so rarely,
it is still better than in the mortal world
going off and not returning.

The commentarial tradition looks to the obscure Tang couplet for a "source"—and there is no doubt that lyricists were incorporating bits of Tang poetry—but often the original couplet had been swallowed up in the song lyric tradition, an "idea" (*yi* 意) that was often reformulated. We might cite a "Pusa man" on the Seventh Eve by Chen Shidao:³⁴

行雲過盡星河爛。爐煙未斷蛛絲滿。想得兩眉顰。停針憶遠人。
河橋知有路。不解留郎住。天上隔年期。人間長別離。

The moving clouds have all passed by,
the River of Stars is sparkling.
Smoke from the brazier has not yet ceased,
spider webs are everywhere.
I imagine her two brows frowning.
She puts down her needle, thinking of someone far away.
She knows that there is a way over the bridge in that River.
It doesn't make him stay where he is.
In Heaven they meet once a year.
Among mortals there is parting forever.

We cannot tell whether Qin Guan's or Chen Shidao's lyric came first, but we can see how a piece of an old poem came to be circulating in song lyric without necessarily knowing the source (in this case a "source" whose author is disputed). On one level it is implicit that, unlike the

33. QTs 297II, 32659.

34. Tang Guizhang 1999, 752.

immortal lovers, mortals will suffer parting—by death, reappointment to a new post, or just “moving on.” Qin Guan takes the familiar idea farther. By the end of the second stanza, his contempt for lovers being together all the time is clear. As a comment in *Gujin citong* 古今詞通 expresses: “Seeing one another often is not fresh; what he says is quite so” (數見不鮮, 說得極是).³⁵ The phrase “every morning and every evening” recalls the goddess of Wu Mountain, who claimed to be “clouds of dawn and evening rain” every day, the “clouds and rain” that was the standard term for sexual intercourse, with the goddess becoming the standard figure for the singer, the “moving cloud,” who moves on from lover to lover.³⁶

Earlier we discussed how Qin Guan had learned from Liu Yong. The cultural values by Qin Guan’s time, however, had changed profoundly.³⁷ The speaker in Liu Yong’s lyrics may have yearned for the beloved from a distance, but there is no hint that he wanted anything other than to spend every morning and every evening with her, engaging in bedroom activities proper to morning and evening. Qin Guan values the yearning that comes from distance; even in the short time the Oxherd and Weaver have together, he negatively invokes the journey back to separation.

It is true that the exquisite pain of separation was the Tang and Five Dynasties legacy to song lyric. There as a brief and sporadic pleasure in presence in mid-eleventh century lyric. By Qin Guan’s time distance returns as a theme, here elevated above actual encounter. The world of song lyric does not want women around too much anymore; they acquire value in being distant and desired.

35. Xu Peijun 1985, 56.

36. See the conclusion of Liu Yong’s “Ji wutong” 擊梧桐, in Tang Guizhang 1999, 47; Xue Ruisheng 1994, 154.

37. There is a question whether this is due to individual difference or a cultural change. It is an impossible question to answer because Liu Yong is the sole spokesman for a certain segment of the cultural world. Even beyond Qin Guan, however, we see representations of distancing and deferral increasing in the last part of the eleventh century.

ELEVEN

He Zhu

He Zhu 賀鑄 (1052–1125) was, with Qin Guan, the most admired practitioner of “song lyric proper” in the first part of the twelfth century. Such a statement is justified from contemporary evidence, but some caution is warranted because the evidence is largely from members of Su Shi’s circle, with which He Zhu was marginally affiliated. Members of that circle tended to be generous in expressing mutual appreciation, and the survival of voluminous literary collections from the circle sometimes makes it difficult to see outside the circle. Zhou Bangyan was working at the same time, but he was invisible to the circle, his preeminence attested only later.

As is often the case, the survival advantage that follows from popularity creates more problems than it solves and reminds us of the chaos accompanying the transmission of Northern Song lyric into the Southern Song. Our two primary sources for He Zhu’s lyrics are the *Dongshan ci* 東山詞 and the *He Fanghui ci* 賀方回詞. *Dongshan ci* survives in a Southern Song edition. Originally in two fascicles, only *Dongshan ci*’s first fascicle survives, with 109 lyrics. The table of contents of the second fascicle also survives. *He Fanghui ci* survives in a Qing manuscript, also in two fascicles, with 144 lyrics. The problem is that these two versions of the collection share only eight lyrics. We might believe that *He Fanghui ci* represents the missing second fascicle of *Dongshan ci*; but when we compare the two tables of contents, it is clear

that it is not (though it is possible that *He Fanghui ci* contains a few of the lyrics in the missing fascicle of *Dongshan ci*).

The third significant source for He Zhu's lyrics is the anthology *Yuefu yaci* of 1146. This contains forty-nine lyrics by He Zhu, of which a remarkable nineteen (almost 40 percent) are found in neither collection of He Zhu's lyrics. One of these, to "Liuzhou getou" 六州歌頭, is a military, anti-foreign lyric unlike anything else in He Zhu's work.¹ I might add that there was a lyric to "Shizhou yin" 石州引, cited in Wu Zeng's 吳曾 *Nenggaizhi cihua* 能改齋詞話, also mentioned by Wang Zhuo, who claims to have seen He Zhu's draft with corrections.² This lyric is in neither of the two main sources. There are other such lyrics by He Zhu, cited or anthologized in the Southern Song, that do not appear in either the *Dongshan ci* 東山詞 or the *He Fanghui ci*.

We know from Zhang Lei's 張耒 (1054–1114) preface that He Zhu had made a draft "collection" of his lyrics during his lifetime, which is the earliest evidence of a lyricist making such a collection of his own song lyrics. But the evidence from what survives is that in the Southern Song He Zhu's lyrics were circulating individually and in selections that purported to be "the collection."

We do not have many contemporary prefaces for Northern Song song lyric collections, so they are particularly valuable for their attempt to reconcile the new genre within the range of values acceptable in a "classical" literary context. When He Zhu sought a preface for a draft of his lyrics, he turned to none other than Zhang Lei, one of the principal "protégés" of Su Shi, but the one who had the least interest and talent in the genre.³

Zhang Lei's preface is little more than a reiteration of the classical theory of poetry, trying to reconcile how it was understood in the Song with the practice of song lyric.

文章之於人，有滿心而發，肆口而成，不待思慮而工，不待雕琢而麗者，皆天理之自然而情性之道也。

1. *Yuefu yaci* (SBCK) zhong, 24a.

2. Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 447.

3. Although He Zhu outlived Zhang by eleven years and the current collection(s) of He's lyrics were put together after Zhang's death, the preface circulated with the lyrics, giving it the imprimatur of the Su Shi lineage.

The relation of literary works to a person is this: something fills the heart and comes out; they let their mouth loose and it is complete; skill does not depend on brooding thought; beauty does not depend on craftsmanship. In every case it is being naturally so according to Heaven's principle, and the Way of emotion and human nature.

Zhang goes on to the cases of Liu Bang and Xiang Yu, not "childishly sentimental" (*ernü zhi qing* 兒女之情) but moved to express their genuine sentiment on certain occasions, with expressions that became song.

予友賀方回博學業文，而樂府之詞高絕一世，携一編示予，大抵倚聲而為之辭，皆可歌也。或者譏方回好學能文，而惟是為工何哉。予應之曰：是所謂滿心而發，肆口而成，雖欲已焉而不能者。若其粉澤之工，則其才之所至，亦不自知也。

My friend He Zhu is widely learned and has made letters his profession, yet his song lyrics (*yuefu zhi ci*) are supreme in this age. He brought a collection to show me. Overall they make lyrics according to a tune and can all be sung. Some have sneered, asking why He Zhu, who loves learning and is good at belles lettres, takes only this as his finest efforts. I answered that person: "This is what I mean by 'something fills the heart and comes out; they let their mouth loose and it is complete'—someone who is unable to stop even though he wants to." If it is a question of his skill in feminine delicacy, then this is where his talents led him—he didn't even know.

To the reader of He Zhu's finely crafted lyrics, often building on Tang, Five Dynasties, and mid-eleventh century lyrics, Zhang Lei's defense sounds odd. It is a little less odd if we see Huang Tingjian's far more interesting defense of Yan Jidao in the background.⁴ This is, however, the only way the contemporary world could justify a collection almost entirely of love lyrics. Both invoke criticisms in order to refute such criticisms. Both ultimately justify the lyricist as a precious fool, following his nature.⁵

4. See Chapter 6.

5. Zhang Lei's conclusion is quite strange, invoking first the splendid halls of the aristocracy and the sleeves of famous beauties, followed incongruously by Qu Yuan and Song Yu,

Although we will find that He Zhu was a more diverse lyricist, the lineage of Yan Jidao is probably the best place to start if we want to understand He Zhu. Yan Jidao was bound to his immediate past, mid-eleventh century song practice. He Zhu was working in an age becoming intensely interested in Tang and Five Dynasties song lyric, and in the erudite reuse of Tang poems and pieces of Tang poetry. But there is a continuity from Yan Jidao to He Zhu. The continuity is clear, but no less clear is the difference between the erudite aficionado of He Zhu's generation and the somewhat older lyricist Yan Jidao.

He Zhu's thematic and stylistic range is far greater than that of Qin Guan; but, as an exemplar of "song lyric proper," he succeeds by finely chosen words and a stylistic polish and perfection that is neither "natural" nor presents itself as natural. He is a craftsman. If he writes about "feminine delicacy" (literally "powder and unguent," 粉澤), it is not by unwitting accident; he writes this way because this was the mainstream style of "song lyric proper," and it invited an emotional investment in relationships inseparable from their discursive representation.

Qin Guan somehow created the image of a lover who inspired post-humous anecdotes. From Southern Song miscellanies to modern scholars, this is what one strain of song lyric's readership wanted to find in the genre. Such a narrative ties the love song to the values articulated by Zhang Lei, that a literary text emerges from genuine feeling. Even Yan Jidao, the most historically elusive lyricist, has been in recent years provided with a complex and fanciful narrative of his love life. In most cases we simply do not know the truth: some surely wrote because they were in love; some surely wrote without loving at all; some probably fell in love in the hope of writing well; and some probably began not particularly in love and fell in love through writing. The one thing we know for certain is that the quality and persuasiveness of the lyric does not depend on genuine feeling; it rather comes from seeming genuine.

In the case of He Zhu, however, we know that he sometimes wrote lyrics because he was in love. We know this because he was a good friend of Li Zhiyi, who wrote colophons and whose colophons have survived.

then Su Wu and Li Ling—the second set of pairs lending to He Zhu's lyrics an implication of public failure poetically displaced.

He Zhu told Li Zhiyi of his love affair, and the account is persuasively banal, with none of the flirtatious panache of a good Qin Guan story. The colophon was attached to two lyrics that were omitted when Li Zhiyi collected his colophons. Subsequent scholars have tried to reattach particular lyrics to the colophon from He Zhu's considerable corpus.⁶

題賀方回詞

右賀方回詞。吳女宛轉有餘韻，方回過而悅之，遂將委質焉，其投懷固在所先也。自方回南北，垢面蓬首，不復與世故接，卒歲注望，雖傳記抑揚一意不遷者，不是過也。方回每為吾語，必悵然恨不即致之。一日暮夜，叩門墜簡，始輒異其來非時，果以是見計。繼出二闕，予嘗報之曰：已儲一升許淚，以俟佳作。於是呻吟不絕韻，幾為之墮睫。尤物不奈久，不獨今日所嘆。予豈木石哉。其與我同者，試一度之。

On Lyrics by He Zhu

To the right are lyrics by He Zhu. A Wu girl was lissome and with abundant charm. He Zhu visited her and was attracted to her, and subsequently was going to present gifts.⁷ Their love was firmly established before that. Since He Zhu had been traveling all over the place, she went with a dirty face and disheveled hair, and no longer received her old friends. For a whole year she fixed her hopes on him. Even those who in stories never wavered in their commitment despite ups and downs do not surpass her. Whenever he talked about it with me, he was always depressed and regretted that he had not brought her home at once. One day as night was falling, there was a knock at the gate and a note was left for me. At first I thought this untimely visit was strange, but it turned out to be news of her death. Next he brought out these two lyrics. I responded to him: "I have already stored up more than a quart of tears, awaiting your fine compositions." Thereupon I chanted them continuously, and my eyes almost fell out for him. Beguiling women don't last long—this has caused sighs not just in the present. I'm not made of wood or stone. I suggest that those who are the same take their measure.

This meets the standard of reasonably reliable evidence.

He Zhu was certainly not what the tradition wanted as a famous lover: he was famously ugly. He was a member of a military family and

6. QSw 112, p. 143.

7. To purchase her as a concubine.

began his official career on the military track. He was, however, learned in literature and devoted to writing. On the recommendation of Su Shi and others, he made the rare transformation from the military track to the civil track—though he was singularly lackluster in his civil career.

The greater part of He Zhu's surviving lyrics belong to the mainstream tradition of love and longing, and he uses occasional titles only rarely. The texts themselves, however, sometimes include specifics that suggest he is representing the experiences as his own. But by far the largest proportion of his work stands out because of its engagement with earlier poetry.

Working with Old Poems

Beginning in the last quarter of the eleventh century, lyricists increasingly drew resources from Tang and Five Dynasties poetry. The Tang poetry they used was almost exclusively from after the An Lushan Rebellion, and mostly from the ninth century.⁸ This was the age in the Song dynasty when the cult of Du Fu was in full flower, but the Song construction of Du Fu as a Confucian moral exemplar was precisely what song lyric was defining itself against. This was also the age of Huang Tingjian's classical poetics, which created a new poetry through learning and reusing earlier literary material; but even if Huang Tingjian may have drawn unacknowledged inspiration from song lyric practice, he drew more broadly from the textual past and used it more subtly.

Song lyricists (and, no doubt, singers) probably had long used *yinkuo*, redoing a poem as a song lyric. The literary lyricists might change a few words or add a few phrases to fit a tune, as we saw Su Shi do earlier with Zhang Zhihe's song, or as we find He Zhu doing with Du Mu quatrains.⁹ He might take a poem apart and use what he liked in constructing a lyric.

8. Li Bai's "Qingping yue" 清平樂, affiliated with song tradition, was an exception.

9. See "Evening Clouds High" 晚雲高 (Tang Guizhang 1999, 648; Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 50) and "Fishing Boat Returns" 釣船歸 (Tang Guizhang 1999, 649; Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 52), both to "Taiping shi" 太平時.

He Zhu did this with a quatrain from a set entitled "Wu Maiden" 吳姬, by the Late Tang poet Xue Neng 薛能.¹⁰ First, Wu Neng's poem:

畫燭燒蘭暖復迷，殿幃深密下銀泥。
開門欲作侵晨散，已是明朝日向西。

Decorated candles, burning eupatorium oil,
warm and disorienting,
in the great hall hangings are deep and secret,
silver foil lowered.
When the gate was opened to allow for
going one's way at dawnlight,
it was already full morning
with the sun heading westward.

We begin with an interior space of burning candles and scented lamps, giving off a thick smoke, a blur intensified by the layered enclosure of the room, using silver foil to intensify the light through the smoky haze. The enclosure of light and smoke is so complete that when they open it up at what they believe is daybreak, the sun is already well up.

It is not clear that He Zhu improves upon Xue Neng's strange poem, but he redoes it in "Lost in a Drunken Dream" 醉夢迷, to the tune "Chou nu'er" 酬奴兒."

深坊別館蘭閨小，障掩金泥，燈映玻璃，一枕濃香醉夢迷。
醒來擬作清晨散，草草分攜，柳巷鴉啼，又是明朝日向西。

Lodgings in a deep-set ward,
eupatorium chamber small,
screens covered with gold foil,
lamplight shining against glass,
a pillow with strong fragrance,
lost in a drunken dream.
Sobering up, I intended
to go my way at dawnlight,

10. QTs 31041.

11. Tang Guizhang 1999, 655; Zhong Zhenzhen, 117. One peculiarity of the *Dongshan ci* is the use of titles, usually drawn from the lyric itself, followed by the tune title.

hurriedly I said my goodbyes,
 in willow lanes the crows cried out,
 and once again it was full morning
 with the sun heading westward.

He Zhu makes the indeterminate space of Xue Neng's poem clear: it is a small bedchamber; he is with a woman. To Xue Neng's play of light and smoky haze, He Zhu adds drinking and sobering.

He can take a line from one of Li Shangyin's famously obscure "Left Untitled" 無題 poems as his opening and build it into a characteristic song lyric situation. First, Li Shangyin:¹²

來是空言去絕蹤，月斜樓上五更鐘。
 夢為遠別啼難喚，書被催成墨未濃。
 蠟照半籠金翡翠，麝熏微度繡芙蓉。
 劉郎已恨蓬山遠，更隔蓬山一萬重。

That you would come was empty talk,
 you left without a trace,
 the moon slants down past the upper storey,
 the fifth watch bell.
 Dreamed of a distant parting,
 crying couldn't summon;
 a letter was hastily finished,
 ink only half thickened.
 Light from wax candle half encloses
 golden kingfishers;
 the aroma of musk faintly crosses
 embroidered lotuses.
 Young Liu already hated how far
 Penglai Mountain was,¹³
 and past Penglai Mountain
 are ten thousand ridges more.

12. QIs 29205.

13. This refers to the story of Liu Chen meeting immortal women in the mountains, leaving, and never being able to find them again. "Peng Mountain" is Penglai, the dwelling of the immortals.

He Zhu's lyric, to "Jiangchengzi," is included only in the *Yuefu yaci* selection.¹⁴

麝熏微度繡芙蓉，翠衾重，畫堂空。前夜偷期，相見卻匆匆。
心事兩知何處問，依約是，夢中逢。
坐疑行聽竹窗風，出簾櫳，杳無蹤。已過黃昏，才動寺樓鐘。
暮雨不來春又去，花滿地，月朦朧。

"The aroma of musk faintly crosses
embroidered lotuses,"
the kingfisher quilt in layers,
the painted hall empty.
At the time furtively set to meet the night before,
we saw each other, but so hurriedly.
We both knew what was in the heart,
but how could we ask?—
it was all a blur,
meeting in a dream.

At every moment wondering and listening¹⁵
to the wind on my bamboo window,
I go out of the chamber door,
no trace on the faint margins of my vision.
It is already past dusk,
just now the bell in the temple tower stirs.
The evening rain does not come,
spring too goes away,
flowers fill the ground,
the moon in a haze.

The first stanza reads like an exegesis of the Li Shangyin poem. As in the lyric transformation of the Xue Neng poem, He Zhu takes a highly indeterminate classical poem and transforms it into a narrative.

14. Tang Guizhang 1999, 694; Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 441.

15. This seems to be the lover's anticipation, "wondering" whether the sound of the wind might be the beloved coming. *Zuo yi xing ting* 坐疑行聽 seems to work like *xing si zuo xiang* 行思坐想. Examples are given in Liao Xunying 廖珣英, *Quan Song ci yuyan cidian* 全宋詞語言詞典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007), 663.

While the classical poem embeds its images in a set of syntagmatic relations (often ambiguous and with uncertain reference), the lyricist often uses his short periods to make images paratactic, separate pieces of attention or memory unified by the state of mind of the subject. Thus, Li Shangyin: "Light from wax candle half encloses golden kingfishers" (蠟照半籠金翡翠). In contrast He Zhu's line reads: "the kingfisher quilt in layers, / the painted hall empty" (翠衾重, 畫堂空). This was a possibility enabled by the form of song lyric, though the lyricist could also use his short periods to construct a single predicate, as at the end of the first stanza.

In the Li Shangyin poem we do not know if the beloved came to Li Shangyin or not. He Zhu has located the situation in the complex and growing repertoire of scenes in the love narrative of song lyric: this is "the furtive and too-hasty meeting." He has another stanza, however, and he fills it with another moment that has a long pedigree going back to the Tang: "hearing sounds outside and thinking it might be his/her lover coming." In place of the "evening rain," the arrival of the beloved as goddess and cloud and a sexual encounter, we have fallen flowers and moonlight through a faint haze. The "blur" of memory that closes the first stanza becomes the mood-inflected scene, the suggestive external counterpart of memory, in the end.

In the first of thirteen quatrains on his "Southern Garden" 南園, Li He (790–816) had used a very suggestive image for falling flowers: "getting married to the spring breeze without using a matchmaker" (嫁與春風不用媒)—in effect, following one's passions and eloping.¹⁶ A good image like this was destined to keep coming back. Earlier we saw how Zhang Xian used the image in "Yicong hua ling" for the young woman who sees her fate as not up to the fate of "the spring flowers that still knew enough to marry the east wind [spring breeze]." The image begged transference to flowers that did not fall in spring, such as lotuses. The Late Tang poet Han Wo 韓偓 used this in a poem titled "Conveying Grievance" 寄恨: "The lotus flowers were unwilling to marry the wind

16. QTs 20690.

of spring" (蓮花不肯嫁春風).¹⁷ This returns in a lyric to "Ta suo xing" from *Dongshan ci* called "Loving Hearts/Stalks Bitter" 芳心苦:¹⁸

楊柳回塘，鴛鴦別浦。綠萍漲斷蓮舟路。
斷無蜂蝶慕幽香，紅衣脫盡芳心苦。
返照迎潮，行雲帶雨。依依似與騷人語。
當年不肯嫁春風，無端卻被秋風誤。

Willows at the bend of the pool,
mandarin ducks at parting's shore.
Green duckweed has flooded over,
cutting off the way for the lotus boat.
No bees or butterflies at all
to yearn for its remote fragrance,
its red robes all stripped away,
the loving heart bitter.

Setting sunlight meets the high tide,
the moving clouds bear rain.
Faintly, as if speaking with
the poet of the Li Sao.
Back then it was "unwilling
to marry the wind of spring,"
and now it finds itself betrayed
by the wind of autumn.

While women can be described as flowers and flowers can be described as women in song lyric, flowers are flowers and women are women after all. Once "the poet of the Li Sao" is invoked, however, we are potentially in the realm of *meiren fangcao* 美人芳草 ("fair women and fragrant plants" [including flowers]), where everything is a figure for bad political experiences. In the particularly nasty political climate of the late eleventh century, such a reading is even more inviting. This type of political reading of the standard material of song lyric proper became fashionable in the mid- and late Qing. In the case of the lyric above, the Qing critic

17. QTs 37999.

18. Tang Guizhang 1999, 652; Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 78.

of song lyric Chen Tingzhuo 陳廷焯 (1853–92) said that it must figuratively refer to something—some political experience is implied. He Zhu's modern commentator Zhong Zhenzhen has suggested that it is He Zhu's regret at not having earlier allied himself with Wang Anshi's New Policies, so that he now finds himself not employed to his full abilities in the restoration of the Conservatives in the Yuanyou reign.

Chen Tingzhuo may be right that it refers to something, and Zhong Zhenzhen may even be right in his specification of what that "something" is. In the world of song lyric of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, however, the intensely politicized discourse "outside" was precisely what was to be avoided. One could indeed complain about the sorrow of exile, but that was more a statement of personal feeling than a political criticism of the faction responsible for one's exile. We must at least allow the possibility that rather than taking song lyric proper out of its enclosure and using it for figurative reference to the lyricist's political fate, this lyric is allowing Qu Yuan, as someone of great sensibility and suffering, into the realm of song lyric proper.

Tang poetry, in bits and pieces and whole poems, made appearances throughout the lyrics of this period. In He Zhu we also see clear references to Tang song lyrics preserved in *Huajian ji*, as well as to imitations of those lyrics. This is particularly clear in a series of lyrics in *He Fanghui ci* to the tune "Pusa man," one of the favorite *xiaoling* tunes in *Huajian ji*. The following lyric is the seventh in that set.¹⁹

子規啼夢羅窗曉，開奩拂鏡嚴妝早。彩碧畫丁香，背垂裙帶長。
鈿箏尋舊曲，愁結眉心綠。猶恨夜來時，酒狂歸太遲。

A cuckoo cries out in a dream,
the gauze window-screen brightens with dawn,
she opens the case and shines her mirror,
her formal toilette done early.
Brightly colored green painted with lilacs,
skirt's sash dangles long at her back.
On her inlaid zither she rehearses an old tune,
knitting eyebrows arch in sorrow.

19. Tang Guizhang 1999, 669; Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 247.

She is still resentful at how last night
that wild drunk came home so late.

The opening line recalls a "Pusa man" by Wen Tingyun:²⁰

花落子規啼，綠窗殘夢迷。

Flowers fall, the cuckoo cries out,
behind the green window-screen the fading dream is lost.

"Rehearsing an old tune" (尋舊曲) is borrowed from a Wei Zhuang lyric. But these echoes only contribute to a kind of lyric that had virtually disappeared, until it was recovered around the turn of the twelfth century. Even the final motif—the drunken husband returning late—had all but disappeared after the *Huajian ji*. It is suggestive that while lyrics in the *Huajian ji* and other Tang lyrics treat the return of the drunken husband by night, here that return is evoked in retrospect, just as He Zhu's lyric retrospectively evokes *Huajian ji*.

One of the most telling indications of the literary transformation of song lyric are the internal references to "chanting" or "reciting" (*yin* 吟 and *yingyong* 吟詠) a lyric, rather than singing it.²¹ However much its practitioners wanted to claim its difference from classical poetry as a genre, it had become a literary genre that might be performed, rather than a text for performance.

As He Zhu could capture the stylish focus of *Huajian ji xiaoling*, he could also recall the party songs of Yan Shu, earlier in the century, as in "The Genuine When Drunk" 醉中真 (to "jianzi Huan xi sha" 減字浣溪沙):²²

不信芳春厭老人。老人幾度送餘春。惜春行樂莫辭頻。
巧笑豔歌皆我意，惱花顛酒拚君瞋。物情惟有醉中真。

20. Zeng Zhaomin, 104.

21. For example, "Wants to Be Dazed and Stupefied" 要銷凝 (Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 189) and "The River Like Satin" 江如練 (Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 196).

22. Tang Guizhang 1999, 653; Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 86.

It's not true that sweet spring
 can't stand old men.
 Old men have seen the last of spring
 on its way so many times.
 Don't keep on refusing
 to take pleasure in cherishing spring.
 Coy smiles and seductive songs
 are both what's on my mind,
 flustered by flowers, going crazy with drink,
 I don't care about your disapproving glare.
 The way things are, you can only find
 the genuine when drunk.

The title phrase is from Li Bai, declaring that finding "the genuine when drunk" is better than seeking the immortals (also "genuine beings," *zhen-ren* 真人). He Zhu comes to the "genuine when drunk" from a different angle, using the phrase of persuasion ("don't keep on refusing") from Yan Shu's "Huan xi sha," urging someone to drink and make merry. But the voice addressing someone opens a space for a different kind of addressee—not someone whose "care is wasted on things too far," but someone who stares at the speaker himself in disapproval for his wild behavior, so inappropriate for an old man. He Zhu's speaker defies that representative of "public decency," but something of the innocence of the party song of Yan Shu's era has been lost. The growing public morality of the last part of the eleventh century—a world that disapproved of song lyric and its close ties to a discourse of love—has been introduced into the party with its "coy smiles and seductive songs" in order to be rejected.

The song lyric was supposed to be the successor of older *yuefu*, which had flourished in the Tang and pre-Tang, but had largely disappeared from the classical poetry of the Northern Song. Most of the titles of the lyrics in *Dongshan ci* are drawn from phrases in the lyrics themselves; two exceptions, to the tune "Xiao mei hua" 小梅花 (the earliest examples of this pattern), are given old *yuefu* titles: "Bring in the Ale" ("Jiang jin jiu" 將進酒), and "Hard Traveling" ("Xinglu nan" 行路難).²³ They

23. Tang Guizhang 1999, 654; Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 98, 103. The first of these is attributed to Gao Xian 高憲 (*jinshi* 1203) in *Zhongzhou yuefu* 中州樂府. Since *Zhongzhou*

are remarkable works, somehow translating the energy of Li Bai's *yuefu* successfully into song lyric (with the help of a tune pattern predominantly in three-syllable and seven-syllable lines, like many earlier *yuefu*). Here is "Hard Traveling":

城下路，淒風露，今人犁田古人墓。
 岸頭沙，帶蒹葭，漫漫昔時、流水今人家。
 黃埃赤日長安道，倦客無漿馬無草。
 開函關，掩函關，千古如何、不見一人閑。
 六國擾，三秦掃，初謂商山遺四老。
 馳單車，致緘書，裂荷焚芰、接武曳長裾。
 高流端得酒中趣，深入醉鄉安穩處。
 生忘形，死忘名，誰論二豪、初不數劉伶。

Road at the foot of the city wall,
 chill dew in the wind,
 men of the present are plowing their fields
 in the graves of the ancients.
 Sand by the banks,
 lined with reeds and rushes,
 as time goes on from olden days
 flowing water becomes present-day homes.
 Yellow dust and ruddy sun,
 the road to Chang'an,
 the weary traveler has nothing to drink,
 the horse has no hay.
 They open Han Pass gate,
 they close Han Pass gate,
 how has it been since ancient days
 that you don't see a single person at ease?

yuefu was compiled well before the fall of the Song, the fact that the lyric is included in our extant *Dongshan ci*, deemed a "Song edition" but of unknown date, is not persuasive proof that it is not by Gao Xian. The lyric clearly belongs with the following "Hard Traveling," which is not among the two lyrics representing Gao Xian in *Zhongzhou ji*—though that is a selective anthology. The other lyric attributed to Gao Xian there is, however, a "Meihua yin" 梅花引 (an alternative term for "Xiao meihua") of the same kind. Arguments could be made for either attribution, but none are strong enough to dismiss competing arguments. It is true that "Bring in the Ale" and "Hard Traveling" are anomalous among lyrics of He Zhu's day, but he composed a number of anomalous lyrics, and it would be too narrow-minded to reject the attribution on such grounds.

Six Kingdoms in turmoil,
 thrice-divided Qin swept away,²⁴
 at first they claimed that on Mount Shang
 there remained four old men.
 A single carriage sped along,
 he delivered the sealed letter.
 They tore up their lotus and burned their caltrop,
 trailing long robes, they walked one after the other.²⁵
 The noblest sort indeed should find
 lively interest in ale,
 entering deep into the land of drunkenness,
 which is a stable place.
 Alive they forget their bodies,
 in death they forget fame,
 Who will consider that the two swaggering figures
 at first did not think Liu Ling worth considering?²⁶

Anyone reading the song lyric tradition up to this point should be shocked. By this time people were respectfully calling song lyric *yuefu*, but this is indeed *yuefu* in the older sense and not song lyric as it had been practiced in the Song. If the opening sounds remarkably like a Tang *yuefu* or "song" (*gexing* 歌行), the reason is because it is, in fact, a Tang "song," the first lines of the first of a set of "Sad Songs" ("Bei ge" 悲歌), by Gu Kuang 顧況 (ca. 727–ca. 816).²⁷

24. As the Qin broke up, the former Six Kingdoms conquered by Qin were reestablished. Qin itself was divided among three Qin generals, who were in turn swept away by Liu Bang, the Han founder, and Xiang Yu.

25. After Liu Bang established the Han, he was told there were still four men he could not summon, old recluses on Mount Shang. When Liu Bang (Han Gaozu) wanted to replace his heir apparent with the son of a favorite, the heir apparent wrote to the four recluses asking for their help. They gave up their reclusion ("tore up their lotus [robes] and burned their caltrop [robes]") and went to court to plead for the heir apparent. Liu Bang was so impressed that this had brought them to him that he kept his heir apparent.

26. Liu Ling of the third century was the exemplary heavy drinker. In his "Encomium for the Power of Ale" he refers to "two swaggering figures by his side." These men were identified as a noble lord and a recluse. The drinker represents another set of values opposed to both.

27. QTs 13630. These Tang "songs" had the manner of song, but were not necessarily meant to be sung.

邊城路，今人犁田昔人墓。岸上沙，昔日江水今人家。

Road by a frontier wall,
men of the present are plowing their fields
in the graves of men of olden times.
Sand on the banks,
river waters of olden days
become homes of present men.

Valleys become hills and hills become valleys over the course of time. We have already seen how He Zhu builds with pieces of earlier poetry; the surprising thing here is that the poem he chose set a tone and theme that did not belong to song lyric proper. He continued with another piece by Gu Kuang, entitled "The Road to Chang'an" 長安道:²⁸

長安道，人無衣，馬無草。何不歸來山中老。

The road to Chang'an,
the man has no clothes,
the horse has no hay.
Why not go back and grow old in the hills?

As one goes to Chang'an seeking employment, the traveler has to go through the Han Pass barrier, where he has to show his credentials in order to continue on. With an echo of a Meng Jiao poem, everyone seems to be rushing to the great city to find a position, and no one seems to be at ease.²⁹ The alternative is going back to the hills to live as a recluse.

Here we might pause to ask what is happening. Gu Kuang is in fact a very striking poet, though he was hardly one of the more admired poets in the Song. He Zhu quotes two poems quite close to one another in the standard sequence of Gu Kuang's poetry collection, which probably represents the sequence of Song editions.³⁰ It looks as though He Zhu had been reading Gu Kuang and came across striking lines; in reworking them into a song lyric, he thought of earlier lines he had read

28. QTs 13623.

29. QTs 19920.

30. The current version shows no trace of reorganization by genre or topic.

in the collection. This theme of "the road to Chang'an" reminded him of a striking poem in Meng Jiao's collected poems, which had recently been edited by Song Minqiu.

Where does he go with this in the second stanza? He has two motifs to work with. First, opening and closing the Han Pass barrier recalls the founding of the Han, with the barrier supposedly serving as Qin's protection from outside attack. Qin is penetrated, first by Liu Bang and then by Xiang Yu, with Liu Bang ultimately victorious and founding the Han dynasty. Then he recalls the end of Gu Kuang's "The Road to Chang'an": "Why not go back and grow old in the hills?" Everyone is rushing to Chang'an to seek recognition from the emperor—but then he recalls the four old men whom Liu Bang, as the first Han Emperor, famously, could not get to come to him—the "Four Graybeards" of Mount Shang, who had chosen "to grow old in the hills."

In the crisis of dynastic succession, however, the "Four Graybeards" were indeed convinced to go to the emperor in Chang'an at the Heir Apparent's behest. He Zhu treats this with great contempt in the last part of the second stanza, afterward recalling one moment in the literary tradition in which the nobleman and the recluse were both scorned—in Liu Ling's "Encomium for the Power of Ale."

There is much to reflect on here about the adjudication of values in the discourse of song lyric (if not necessarily in the life choices of lyricists). In He Zhu's time it would have been easy to identify those scurrying to Chang'an as members of the political factions and the "recluses" as the new Daoxue scholars, with the sometimes inebriate world of song lyric being the rejection of both choices. But no less important is the capacity to use song lyric to reflect on a question with the resources at hand, past examples. This was, of course, how many arguments were constructed in prose and classical poetry; but song lyric enabled a level of association that was difficult, if not impossible, in classical poetry and prose. Most important, song lyric, with its inherent negativity, invited the introduction of a third and preferable alternative to a standard binary choice. The third term—being a drinker in the lyric above—breaks the terms of choice. You can be a committed drinker whether you choose to serve in office or not. It was a way out of a closed system of values.

The Hengtang Road

He Zhu's most famous lyric is one of the few included in both *Dongshan ci* and *He Fanghui ci*, as well as the *Yuefu yaci* selection. In the *Dongshan ci* the title is "The Hengtang Road," and the tune is "Qingyu an" 青玉案.³¹

凌波不過橫塘路，但目送、芳塵去。
 錦瑟華年誰與度。月橋花院，瑣窗朱戶，只有春知處。
 飛雲冉冉蘅皋暮，彩筆新題斷腸句。
 若問閒情都幾許。一川煙草，滿城風絮，梅子黃時雨。

The "wave-walker" does not cross
 the Hengtang Road,
 my eyes merely follow
 the fragrant dust departing.
 Brocade zither's flowering years,
 with whom does she pass them?
 Moonlit bridge, flower-filled yard,
 latticed windows, vermilion door,
 only spring knows where.
 The flying cloud moves slowly on,
 twilight comes to a marsh of asarum,
 my brush of many colors recently wrote
 heart-broken lines.
 Should you ask of this ennui,
 how much is there in all?—
 a whole river of grass in mist,
 filaments in the breeze filling the city,
 rain at the time the plums turn yellow.

Song lyric proper was becoming literary, with set phrases that touched back on the literary tradition and carried rich associations. Hengtang was just outside of old Suzhou, with associations of old love poems from the Southern *yuefu* and Tang. He Zhu also lived there. In earlier song lyric the beloved was conventionally associated with a cloud, evoking the goddess of Wu Mountain who visited the king of Chu in

31. Tang Guizhang 1999, 659; Zhong Zhenzhen, 152.

a dream, made love and then vanished, telling him that she was dawn clouds and twilight rain. Thus the beloved is the cloud who moves on with no fixed place, an established commonplace in earlier *xiaoling*. He Zhu's literary song lyric here chooses the goddess's later, more literary incarnation in Cao Zhi's "Poetic Exposition on the Luo River Goddess" 洛神賦, where the goddess appears to the poet as a "wave-walker." The Luo River goddess was, in turn, commonly understood to stand for Empress Zhen, whom Cao Zhi loved but who had been taken by his older brother Cao Pi. The "marsh of asarum" was where Cao Zhi had halted his carriage when the encounter occurred. "Fragrant dust" can be several things: as the goddess crosses the waves, "dust rises from her gossamer stockings" (羅襪生塵); it is also the crumbling petals of fallen spring flowers. If we take it in the former sense, his eyes are following her departure. If we take it in the latter sense, he watches spring depart without a visit from her.

"Brocade zither's flowering years" is a direct reference to Li Shangyin's most famous poem, "Brocade Zither" 錦瑟, beginning:

錦瑟無端五十絃，一絃一柱思華年。

The brocade zither just happens to have
fifty strings,
every string and every bridge
recalls flowering years.

In the Song it was believed by some that "brocade zither" (a highly ornamented zither) played on the name of a servant (Brocade Zither) with whom Li Shangyin had an affair.³² For He Zhu it clearly stands for the beloved, figured as the goddess. One of the standard tropes in song lyric was the question, "Who is she with now?" He Zhu evokes her home, to which spring may come, but "only spring knows where" it is now.

She is, of course, the cloud, as he is the talented poet, with the "brush of many colors" mourning her loss. Another standard trope is quantifying sorrow, or in this case *xianqing* 閑情, literally "idle feelings," translated as "ennui"—not passion or pangs of yearning, but a vague

32. Liu Xuekai 劉學鐸 et al., *Li Shangyin ziliao huibian* 李商隱資料彙編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2001), 14.

melancholy and sense of loss. He gives three answers, the first two of which are conventionally coded with melancholy. A swathe of plants in the mist (literally "a river of") is a vague scene of emptiness and spatial disorientation, being in a blur. The "filaments" (*xu* 絮), bits of plants and insect floss, play on the homophonous *xu* 緒, best described as "moments of feeling," when one is suddenly "touched" by something. It is, however the final scene, "rain at the time the plums turn yellow," that was supposed to have made He Zhu's reputation as a lyricist. Around Suzhou the mid-summer rain was called a "plum rain" (梅雨), a steamy drizzle. None other than Huang Tingjian praised the line and contributed to a growing body of companion pieces to "Qingyu an," all matching He Zhu's rhymes—including one lyric attributed to Su Shi (who was already dead when He Zhu's lyric was probably composed).

It is reasonable for the modern reader to ask why this line was so celebrated. The aficionado of song lyric would simply say, "It's obvious and too subtle to put into words," leaving the questioner in the position of a Philistine, hoping for a moment of enlightenment. One could offer many points about what made the line such a sensation: the unusual rhythm and grammar (4:1) for a five-syllable line, marking it as song lyric rather than classical poetry; the mid-summer season marker, creating an interval after the spring motif in the first stanza; the evocation of "flower and fruit" as the figure for the season of sexuality and then of having children; and surely not least, the visual image of circles of color in the pervasive drizzle.

All of these factors may have contributed to the phenomenon, but they may be less important than the social phenomenon itself, which, once initiated, contributed to constituting a community of song lyric writers through a shared aesthetic judgment, a judgment evoking the elusive, just as song lyric as a category was defined by its difference, by what it was "not." The aficionado who would scorn the question "why?" in some fundamental way continues the old hope of song lyric, to get beyond the explicable to the immediacy of words in constructing a mood-inflected scene.

Another of He Zhu's best-known lyrics, from *Dongshan ci*, is "Half-Dead Tung Tree," to "Si Yue ren" 思越人 (adding "also known as 'Zhegu tian'"), from 1101.³³ It was composed on his return to Suzhou ("Chang

33. Tang Guizhang 1999, 645; Zhong Zhenzhen 1989, 24.

Gate") from the capital after the death of his wife. The reference in the title goes back to the Western Han writer Mei Sheng, who once wrote about a half-dead tung tree to be cut down to make a zither whose music is particularly sad.

重過閨門萬事非。同來何事不同歸。
梧桐半死清霜後，頭白鴛鴦失伴飛。
原上草，露初晞。舊樓新壘兩依依。
空床臥聽南窗雨，誰復挑燈夜補衣。

Once again I pass through Chang Gate,
everything is wrong.
Together we came, why is it
we didn't go on together?
The tung tree is half dead
after the clear frost,
white-headed, the mandarin duck flies,
having lost his companion.³⁴

Grasses on the plain,
the dew just dried.
Our former roost, the new tomb,
both leave a pang of yearning.
I lie on my empty bed and listen
to rain by the south-side window;
who will ever again keep the lamp lit
mending clothes by night?

It is worth reading this against Su Shi's lament for his wife, written in 1075.³⁵

He Zhu's lyric is no less successful than Su Shi's, but he achieves his success within the essentially sentimental discourse of song lyric proper, rather than by the brittle but effective resistance to obvious sentimentality in Su Shi's lyric. He himself is now the "half-dead tung tree," the material to make a zither and to make music that is heartbreaking because of the state of the tree. He begins by coming back to his beloved

34. The mandarin duck has a tuft of white feathers. Ducks mated for life and were the emblem of man and wife.

35. See "Absent Women" in Chapter 7, "Su Shi."

Suzhou, but rather than truly "coming home," he finds that it is not the same anymore. He takes material from older poetry—as He Zhu always does—and fuses it into a new situation: "Together we came, why is it we didn't go on together?"³⁶

We therefore have two figures: the half-dead tung tree and the solitary mandarin duck. The modern scholar would note the process of detachment in the sequence: the tung tree is one thing, half of which is dead; the mandarin ducks were a couple, one of which is gone—but a whole being, even white-haired, remains. In the old *yuefu*, life is as brief as the dew on the plants, and here the dew has dried; the beloved wife is gone, leaving only yearning in this place that was once home.

The sentimentality of song lyric proper shows its face in the penultimate line: "I lie on my empty bed and listen to rain by the south-side window." With many variations, such a line was a staple of the love discourse of song lyric proper. It could be followed by the question of when one would see the beloved again, how he stays awake, and how he misses the beloved; in a very sophisticated lyric, the line could be left hanging there, unresolved. But He Zhu fills that space with something else: what is lost is not a moment of love, but a familiar scene of domesticity. In He Zhu's love lyrics there is a general opulence: the beloved's smile is worth ten thousand pieces of silver (千金笑), and she wears costly ornaments. Words can be spent far more lavishly than cash in a strained domestic economy. He Zhu was a low-level official and certainly not rich. Patching clothes cuts through the discourse of love to something that cannot be replaced—not by all the frowning maidens of Suzhou.

He Zhu's lyric is, in some sense, "sentimental"; but it goes beyond the conventionally sentimental in precisely the moment it places the woman in a domestic economic system defined by need. He Zhu never tells us he is part of the same system.

36. See Zhong Zhenzhen's discussion in Tang Guizhang 1986, 482. Zhong nicely observes that He Zhu takes unmemorable and unremembered classical poems and makes them memorable.

T W E L V E

Zhou Bangyan

During Zhou Bangyan's lifetime (1056–1121) there was a community of lyricists tied together by their direct or indirect association with Su Shi (though few followed Su Shi's style in song lyric). They read and critiqued one another's works, wrote colophons and prefaces, and composed companion pieces using the same rhymes as other lyricists in their circle. The genre had become another literati practice, though one that sometimes retained its own set of values (and these resisted shared public values). Even the elusive Yan Jidao, so tied to an earlier generation, was on the margins of that network. But Zhou Bangyan does not appear to have been a part of this community.

While many Southern Song critics considered Zhou Bangyan's work to be the culmination of Northern Song lyric, there is no entirely credible reference to his lyrics from the Northern Song itself. The possible exception is a mention in Chen Shidao's *Houshan shihua* 後山詩話, whose own authenticity has been in doubt since the Southern Song.¹ If Zhou held a brief appointment in Huizong's musical establishment, it was a political one. In Li Qingzhao's critical review of the major

1. A reference to something that occurred after the author's death is one of the most reliable indications that a text has, at the very least, interpolations. Other entries are considered dubious. We simply do not know which entries, if any, are authentic. It is a weak text on which to hang an argument that Zhou Bangyan's lyrics were known to his more famous contemporaries.

figures of song lyric, Zhou Bangyan is unmentioned. Since she picks fault with every lyricist she mentions, one possible explanation for her silence regarding Zhou Bangyan is that his work was above reproach. Another possible explanation is that she either didn't know his work or didn't consider it in the same league as those she did mention.² In *Yuefu yaci* Zeng Zao begins the second fascicle with twenty-nine lyrics by Zhou Bangyan, but we must compare that with He Zhu's forty-six lyrics and Ye Mengde's fifty-five in the same fascicle. This may suggest that by 1149 his reputation was "on the rise" (or it may be simply what Zeng Zao had in his library). It seems that Zhou Bangyan's lyrics were not simply the ancestor of the Southern Song style, but that he was selected—from a somewhat less prominent role in the world of song lyric—to be the ancestor.

He was evidently a lyricist working largely in isolation from contemporary lyricists—at least until his later years. Zhou Bangyan is usually treated as somehow "later" than the lyricists discussed previously, but his earliest datable lyrics may be from 1073, the same year that we begin to have credibly datable lyrics for Su Shi.³ His career as a song lyricist overlaps with all the lyricists of the generation after Su Shi, and He Zhu lived longer. None of them (again with the possible exception of Chen Shidao) acknowledge his existence, and he does not acknowledge theirs.

A Hangzhou native, Zhou Bangyan had a good career, neither rising to the heights nor sinking to the depths of officialdom. Things began well for him when he presented a "Poetic Exposition on Bianjing" ("Biandu fu" 汴都賦) to Shenzong in 1072, and it made his reputation. Again in 1098 Zhezong summoned him, asking him if he remembered it, and Zhou Bangyan resubmitted it to the throne. This is solid evidence of someone known by the imperial house. He held a series of reasonably good provincial posts and was at least twice posted to the capital. He was apparently immune to the meteoric rise and fall of careers during the regime of Wang Anshi and his followers.⁴

2. We cannot definitively date the "Discussion of Song Lyric" 詞論. It could be late Northern Song.

3. The 1073 dating for several lyrics is Sun Hong's dating; Luo Kanglie places the earliest lyrics a few years later.

4. There is a tradition culminating in Luo Kanglie that tries to read Zhou's life and lyrics in

In 1105, his fourth year after taking the throne following the premature death of his brother Zhezong, Huizong established his music academy, the Dasheng Fu 大晟府. This event has been made central in the narrative of song lyric in the early twelfth century and is no less central in the rich anecdotal literature on Zhou Bangyan from later in the twelfth century. Zhou Bangyan was indeed summoned to the capital in 1107, but he was appointed to another of Huizong's large cultural projects, the "Rites of Daguan Reign," a position he held until reappointed to a provincial post in 1111.

All the historical sources have him as a *tiju* 提舉 ("supervisor") in the music academy; but all the sources are later—though Wang Zhuo, not too distant in time, believed this to be the case. Since we know dates of Zhou's other posts and we know the dates when others occupied the two "supervisor" posts in the music academy, the problem for scholars has been to find a time when Zhou Bangyan could possibly have held that post in the music academy. Scholarly consensus places this possibility between early winter in 1116 to sometime before the end of spring in 1117, when Zhou was in his early sixties.⁵ This is, of course, an embarrassingly brief tenure in a post to which, according to Southern Song views, Zhou Bangyan was most suited.

One can speculate that he did not fit in well in that intensely politicized institution. We should at least entertain the possibility that he was never part of the music academy, that this was a posthumous appointment made for him by his devoted Southern Song admirers, a position that seemed so "right" that it was repeated constantly and thereby entered the historical record. We might also entertain the possibility that he was not particularly well-known as a lyricist and musical expert in his own day, which would help explain why he was summoned to participate in the compilation of a ritual text. He did, however, write a

relation to the factional struggles between the New Policies faction and the Conservatives. I agree with Sun Hong that he belonged to neither faction and simply didn't care. He wanted to get ahead and curried favor with Huizong's infamous minister Cai Jing. This disagreement between Luo and Sun extends beyond Zhou Bangyan's political consciousness and includes arguments about dating lyrics and about which Song edition is most reliable in representing Zhou's lyrics.

5. Zhuge Yibing 2001, 8–10; Sun Hong, 471; Luo Kanglie 2008, 661. For a good discussion by Sun Hong and Xue Ruisheng, see Sun Hong, 66–74.

preface for Moqi Yong's 万俟詠 collected lyrics, but it is no longer extant. He also seems to have composed new melodies with lyrics (at least there are no known prior examples); this indicates a musical competence, but not necessarily broad expertise.

While he once had a classical literary collection in twenty-four fascicles, most of it has been lost. Judging from what texts we do have, Zhou Bangyan's network of acquaintances was remarkably narrow. Of the forty-one names of colleagues and friends given in Sun Hong's edition, only nine names are not part of a long list of colleagues in the ritual project. The most prominent was Liu Bing 劉昉, for whose grandfather Zhou wrote a tomb inscription. Most striking is the absence of any mention by Zhou's famous contemporaries in song lyric. It may be that he associated with the prominent figures in the capital during Huizong's reign, many of whose works have been largely lost. He may have indeed briefly held a position in the Dasheng Fu, but the degree of his "celebrity" seems to have been the retrospective creation of his ardent admirers in the Southern Song.

He may have had bouts of passion and loves, but apart from one anecdote, as famous as it is improbable, even the Southern Song did not tell many stories about him as a lover.⁶ Somehow Zhou Bangyan's lyrics were not held up to the standard of the "genuine"; when held to that standard in Qing and modern times, he was found wanting. Critics sometimes had recourse to the "musicality" of his lyrics—though unlike Su Shi, his tonal "violations" were considered "twisting" 拗, a creative play on tonal rules that added interest. He was praised for his use of real tones, rather than following their grouping into only two categories, "level" and "deflected" tones; but the long interval between Zhou Bangyan's practice and such observations was such that it is doubtful that the melodies were the same. Moreover, praise for his use of "real"

6. He was supposedly visiting the famous courtesan Shishi 師師 when Emperor Huizong came to pay her a visit. Hiding under the bed while the Son of Heaven favored her, he heard their conversation and reworked it into a *xiaoling* to "Shaonian you" 少年遊 (Sun Hong, 176). On hearing the song, Huizong was incensed and contrived to have him banished. Again visiting Shishi, Huizong found her not at home. When she returned, she explained that she had gone to say good-bye to Zhou Bangyan, who had composed a version of "Lanling Wang" 蘭陵王 (Sun Hong, 31) on the occasion. Hearing this song, Huizong recalled Zhou.

(proto-Mandarin) tones ignores the fact that he was a Hangzhou native. While his own language may have been Bianjing standard, the local language was a Wu dialect, still with seven tones. If, as a child, he had nurses, that would have been their language. And in the Southern Song, local singers in Hangzhou, the capital, would have been speakers of that dialect (though we do not know in what dialect they sang). In *De vulgari eloquentia* Dante speaks of the immediacy of the vernacular not as the "mother tongue," but as the language of one's nurse.

The simple fact is that Zhou Bangyan became famous for a style, the most polished and mannered in the Northern Song; we see the same impulses in Qin Guan and He Zhu, but Zhou Bangyan took it further. If one reads many of the lesser lyricists of the era, one sees that they are generally fluent and easy; they are also predictable. As with classical poems, there were simply too many facile and pleasant song lyrics written by too many people trying their hand at it. Without Su Shi's quirky turn of mind or Yan Jidao's lifetime absorption in the old art of *xiaoling*, distinction was hard to achieve.

Faced with Su Shi's apparently spontaneous genius in classical poetry, Huang Tingjian, as much the pedagogue as the poet, advocated work and poetic learning. This was immensely attractive for a large population of aspiring, but merely mortal poets. His lessons, however, did not translate easily into song lyric. Certainly, following the mood of the times, lyricists became more learned and ever more inclined to the old practice of working lines of earlier poetry into song lyric. But the practice even less guaranteed success in song lyric than in classical poetry. In song lyric everything depended on the phrasing of the transformation and on a poetic discourse whose organization worked very differently from that of classical poetry. Although he has some wonderfully fluent *xiaoling*, Zhou Bangyan developed a style that was markedly "artificial," in the sense that this was not a natural "utterance" but something that had been worked and shaped for the particular needs of a song lyric aesthetic.

Zhou Bangyan's style became the foundation for a dominant strain of Southern Song lyric—or, to put it another way, Southern Song lyricists found in Zhou Bangyan a Northern Song precursor. Our story of Northern Song lyric is, if not entirely a product of the Southern

Song, almost entirely so. It may be significant that Zhou was the only important Northern Song lyricist from Hangzhou, the Southern Song capital. Southern Song admiration of Zhou Bangyan may have been, in part, local pride; but it may also have been related to his handling of language and how his lyrics sounded when performed by local singers.⁷

Zhou Bangyan's immense popularity in the Southern Song is attested by the fact that there are ten or so editions mentioned—some vagueness is warranted by the fact that in some cases we are unsure if the use of different names really represents different editions. We have two traditions surviving, the first being the 1180 edition from Lishui 麗水, where Zhou Bangyan had been magistrate. This has a colophon by Qiang Huan, and survives in a Mao Jin copy of the original edition.⁸ It contains 182 lyrics. Then there is a 1211 edition in ten fascicles with commentary by Chen Yuanlong and a preface by Liu Su 劉肅, with only 127 lyrics, arranged by season and then by topic. Given the fact that Zhou Bangyan's collected lyrics were believed to have many false attributions and that Chen Yuanlong was supposed to have carefully edited them, this has been the edition preferred by many, if not all, scholars. As happens so often, we are faced with one of those conundrums we cannot adjudicate: should we trust Chen Yuanlong? Or is he an example of a critic trying to produce the ideal "Zhou Bangyan" for his age?

I am particularly fond of a Zhou Bangyan lyric to "Mulan hua ling" 木蘭花令:⁹

歌時宛轉饒風措。鶯語清圓啼玉樹。
斷腸歸去月三更，薄酒醒來愁萬緒。
孤燈翳翳昏如霧。枕上依稀聞笑語。
惡嫌春夢不分明，忘了與伊相見處。

When she sang, the sound modulated
full of stylishness.
An oriole speaking with clear perfection,
singing out from a tree of jade.

7. For a discussion of Zhou Bangyan's growing popularity in the Southern Song, see Liu and Wang, 391–92.

8. Luo Kanglie 2008 questions whether this preserves the original form of the Qiang Huan edition.

9. Tang Guizhang 1999, 805; Sun Hong, 210.

I went home broken-hearted
 under the midnight moon,
 sobering up from the weak ale,
 thousands of moments of melancholy.

My lone lamp grew shadowed,
 dim as in a fog.

On my pillow indistinctly
 I heard her laughing words.

I can't stand this spring dream
 being so unclear—

I've completely forgotten
 where I met with her.

This is, indeed, not the kind of lyric for which Zhou Bangyan is best known, but it links his work clearly to the fascination with memory that we see in contemporaries such as Yan Jidao. The way in which memory can bind a person to the past, without the particulars, is a concern that appears in some of Zhou Bangyan's better-known lyrics. It is a lyric with much to invite reflection: does he forget the circumstances of a dream encounter or what we took to be a waking encounter in the first stanza—but was it a waking encounter? This lyric is excluded from Chen Yuanlong's edition. But was it excluded for substantive reasons or for not "sounding like" Zhou Bangyan because of its obvious ties to the *xiaoling* of others? I will confine myself largely to the conservative selection of Chen Yuanlong, knowing that the Zhou Bangyan I am reading has been constructed for me by an editor from a much-changed cultural world a century after Zhou's death.

We have only a little evidence about Zhou Bangyan's life from his own times, but we can fill in a fair amount of detail from much later sources. His surviving poetry and prose provide some stable points of reference, but not enough. As the modern commentator Sun Hong observes, many points in this "evidence" are contradictory.¹⁰

Modern Chinese scholars have a passion for the chronologically arranged collection of an author's works. This is a reasonable procedure

10. Sun Hong and Xue Ruisheng have argued that Zhou Bangyan was not charged with a major musical project in the Imperial Music Academy (Dashengfu 大晟府), as is generally believed. Sun Hong, preface 9.

for when an author was intensely conscious of his works within the story of his life and left ample evidence in both texts and paratexts for dating. Du Fu and Su Shi were such authors. Other authors have left credible evidence for dating some works. Still others, like Zhou Bangyan, have left very little. The problem is mapping the song lyrics on what we know of his life. Given Zhou Bangyan's prominence, there are several competing chronologies of his song lyrics. Some cases, such as lyrics composed during his term of service at Lishui, are obvious and credible because they make reference to Lishui and local sites; most dating of the lyrics, however, is built on very fragile evidence.¹¹ Few *manci* lyricists resist the dating of their works as much as Zhou Bangyan. Even when Zhou implies that he is back in the capital revisiting the site of former loves, we cannot be sure whether he really is in the capital or is simply working on a standard topic.

Distance

Liu Yong, the oldest of the major Northern Song lyricists, was probably still alive when Zhou Bangyan was born. Like the other major lyricists of *manci* we have discussed, it is useful to think of Zhou Bangyan as working with the legacy of Liu Yong in *manci*. On at least one occasion Zhou Bangyan uses a line by Su Shi, but there is no external or clear internal evidence that he was otherwise aware of the lyrics of his contemporaries.

Liu Yong's lyrics had pretty much completely mapped out the scenes of love. He may write about longing for the beloved while he is traveling, but he may also describe being with her and coming back to see her again after a long interval. In the simplest terms, the lyrics of the next generation tend to displace the beloved; she is no longer accessible. The poet returns to her residence and she is gone, or he stands before a barrier, able to hear her and see her outline but unable to get to her.

11. The Lishui designations are to some degree suspect because the core of Qiang Huan's initial "gathering" of the collection came from Lishui singers.

We might here recall Yan Jidao's lyric discussed earlier, on revisiting the beloved's home and finding her absent, to "Mulan hua":

The courtyard with its swing,
layered curtains in the twilight.
My brush of many colors came idly
to write verses on her richly carved door.
Red apricots above the wall,
flowers in the last of the rain,
outside the gate, green willows,
catkins after the wind.
All news is cut off from the clouds of dawn,
I wonder where she is.
She must have gone off to act as
King Xiang's spring dream.
My fine steed can recognize
the tracks of former visits
and whinnies passing the road to the east
of the painted bridge.

We might compare one of Zhou Bangyan's most famous *manci* on returning to a woman's residence in the Bianjing Entertainment Quarter, to "Rui long yin" 瑞龍吟.¹²

章臺路。還見褪粉梅梢，試花桃樹。
惜惜坊曲人家，定巢燕子，歸來舊處。黯凝佇。
因念個人癡小，乍窺門戶。侵晨淺約宮黃，障風映袖，盈盈笑語。
前度劉郎重到，訪鄰尋里，同時歌舞。
唯有舊家秋娘，聲價如故。吟箋賦筆，猶記燕臺句。
知誰伴、名園露飲，東城閒步。事與孤鴻去。探春儘是，傷離意緒。
官柳低金縷。歸騎晚、纖纖池塘飛雨。斷腸院落，一簾風絮。

On the Zhang Terrace Road
again I see the plum twigs' fading powder,
the peach trees first flowering.
Peaceful and still are the homes on the lanes of the Quarter,
swallows settle on a place to nest

12. Tang Guizhang 1999, 767; Sun Hong, 1.

and return to their former haunts.

I stand long, lost in brooding,

then thinking on that person, naive and young,

just then peeking through the door of the gate.

At the break of dawn, with "palace yellow" lightly applied,

half-hidden by her sleeve to block the breeze,

charming as she talked, laughing.

Young Liu, here before, comes again,

asking the neighbors, searching the ward

for the singers and dancers of that same time.

There is only the former Autumn Lass

as famous as before.

Of verses I wrote down then

I still recall my "Yan Terrace" lines.

I wonder who her companion is,

drinking out in the open in famous gardens,

walking at leisure in the eastern part of the city.

What happened is gone with the lone swan.

My spring excursion is entirely

an occasion for pain of separation.

The public willows let their golden threads hang low,

I ride homeward late in the day,

a fine, fine rain drifts over the pools.

A garden that breaks the heart,

a whole curtain of willow catkins in the breeze.

Part of the contrast with Yan Jidao is the generic difference between *manci* and *xiaoling*. The two lyrics share essential points, however: the absence of the woman, wondering who she is with now, and the mood-inflected spring scene of willow catkins in the breeze. Both have an internal reference to writing verses, unified by the story of Li Shangyin and "Willow Branch" (Liuzhi 柳枝). "Willow Branch," the orphaned daughter of a merchant, was attracted to Li Shangyin on hearing Li's cousin recite Li Shangyin's "Yan Terrace" poems. Li Shangyin rode to her house and saw her in the doorway, in a scene reminiscent of Zhou Bangyan's memory. Li Shangyin and "Willow Branch" set a time to meet; but he had to leave Luoyang unexpectedly before he could get together with her, and she was later taken away by some powerful,

unnamed person. Li Shangyin then composed a set of poems with the title "Willow Branch" to be inscribed on her former dwelling—as Yan Jidao does in his lyric.¹³ This is one Tang precedent for revisiting the beloved's dwelling after she had gone (though Li Shangyin did not go personally—he had his cousin write the poems on her dwelling for him).

Chinese scholars tend to date this lyric of Zhou Bangyan's to 1096 or 1097, when he returned to Bianjing after a ten-year absence. This begs the question of whether such an event really happened. The experience does not need to have happened; and if it did happen, Zhou Bangyan would have been acting out a scene in the repertoire of a love narrative, almost certainly in order to write this lyric.

The line "Young Liu, here before" comes from a quatrain by the Tang poet Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫. He had visited the peach blossom grove in a Daoist lodge, had been exiled in a political purge at the beginning of Xianzong's reign, and had come back to the same place later to find that everything had changed. This has invited a political reading of "Young Liu, here before, comes again," which lends gravity and seriousness to Zhou Bangyan's lyric. By this point in literary history, however, the politics of Liu Yuxi's poem had long become secondary. Liu Yuxi himself was playing on the story of Liu Chen and Ruan Zhao, who had met two goddesses in a peach grove, had spent time with them, had later left, and were unable to find them again on returning to the same place. Reference to the story of Liu Chen and Ruan Zhao, sometimes via reference to the Tang Liu Yuxi poem, had become a staple of song lyric, on love lost and not to be recovered.¹⁴ Another popular variation on the story was an anecdote about Cui Hu 崔護, who had encountered a young woman on an excursion south of Chang'an at the time of peach blossoms; he left her and when he returned a year later in the same season, he learned that she had died of longing for him.¹⁵ Zhou Bangyan's failed "reencounter" is overdetermined, and he

13. Owen, "What Did Liuzhi Hear?"

14. For the Liu Yuxi phrase used here, see He Zhu's "to Yujia ao" and Chao Buzhi. Commentators acknowledge the Liu Chen and Ruan Zhao story, but add the analogy to Liu Yuxi's political fate to it. Cf. Wang Qiang, 4; a fully developed political reading can be found in Luo Kanglie's comments on the lyric in Tang Guizhang, ed., *Tang Song ci jian-shang cidian* (Hangzhou: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1986), 529–30.

15. *Taiping guangji*, juan 274.

touches all the familiar motifs: willows, peach blossoms, “young Liu, here before.”

The lyric is so much in the vein of returning to the beloved’s dwelling that we easily forget to ask in what sense this girl is indeed a “beloved.” A great deal depends upon the term *chixiao* 癡小, translated literally as “naïve and young.” The question is then: how “young” is “young”? We will not address the moral issue of sleeping with thirteen-year-olds (nor should we piously forget that not so long ago ago it was common among non-elites in Europe and America). But it is not at all clear that this girl of memory has yet reached early puberty. We have only two precedent usages of *chixiao* in Tang poetry.¹⁶ In one case it refers to a young male who doesn’t yet know about canonical books—which is very young indeed! But the most relevant case—and the case probably in Zhou Bangyan’s mind—is one of Bai Juyi’s “New Yuefu,” “Drawing a Silver Pitcher From the Well’s Bottom” 井底引銀瓶, warning against eloping:¹⁷

寄言癡小人家女，慎勿將身輕許人。

I offer these words to the naïve and young girl
of someone’s household:
take care not to promise yourself
lightly to another.

This refers to a girl on the edge of puberty, and the source text sits strangely on a girl in the Entertainment Quarter. Wang Qiang tries to resolve this as “the time when she was just beginning to receive clients” (初始陪客之時).¹⁸ That is possible, but he links it to “just then peeking through the door of the gate,” as if she were looking for clients. This ignores the fact that it is early morning, when, in our abundant accounts of the Entertainment Quarter, the clients are all going home—probably with hangovers. We may have a pre-pubescent girl, practicing her makeup and looking out of the gate curiously. The standard trope of

16. The phrase was not used in song lyric before Zhou Bangyan, and it would not be used again until the thirteenth century, when Zhou’s reputation was at its height.

17. QTs 21904.

18. Wang Qiang, 4.

"who is she sleeping with now," which we see in Yan Jidao's lyric, would be radically changed in this context. Instead of a lost love, we may have nostalgia for innocence, once briefly seen and now surely lost. We cannot tell whether this girl was Zhou Bangyan's sexual partner or a momentary vision, swallowed up by song lyric's discourse of lost love.

The opening "Zhang Terrace Road" places us in the Entertainment Quarter, just as the transition from plum blossoms to peaches is the necessary season marker, placing us at a particular moment in the fixed sequence of flowering trees in spring. "Again I see" (*huan jian* 還見) lets us know that this is a scene of repetition—though we do not know whether this is "spring again" or "I'm back again."

The Entertainment Quarter is described as *yinyin* 愔愔 ("peaceful and still") rather than crowded with carriages and filled with song, as it often is in Liu Yong's lyrics. Zhou Bangyan has not come during "business hours," but at a time suitable for a poetic "return," corresponding to his "first sight" of the girl early in the morning. He is returning to an image that was for him as much an experience as a love affair.

Remarkably, the place is named directly as the "Quarter" (*fangqu* 坊曲, or in an early version, the even more vulgar *fangmo* 坊陌)—"the Zhang Terrace Road" is far more poetic. The flowers repeat their cycles, and even the swallows, who go off and return, are permitted repetition; but this is not so for human beings.

The person who returns does not enter the building as swallows do and reestablish a former nest (if there ever was one). Rather he comes to a halt, stands still, and stares, and in staring remembers a past scene in which the girl appeared. The "first seeing" (*chujian* 初見) of the *xiaoling* becomes a unique and fixed point in experience that prohibits repetition, or allows it to be only marked with what is past, as a re-envisagement. That act of showing oneself, especially at a window or gate, was essential to the commerce of the Entertainment Quarter—though in this case possibly on the margins of innocence, with a young girl at dawn. In contrast to the repetitions of flowers and swallows, humans are caught by *chujian* 初見 (the "first seeing"), a uniqueness that in itself presumes the possibility of loss.

In the stanza transition he becomes Liu Yuxi who, after exile, returned to what was once a grove of peach trees at a Daoist lodge and

finds everything changed. As suggested above, "Liu" is conflated with Liu Chen, who, with his companion Ruan Zhao, encountered two goddesses in a peach grove, left, and could never find them again. As we saw in the beginning, the peach blossoms are still there but the "goddess" is gone.

He doesn't start moaning yet. He checks with the neighbors. He knows the Entertainment Quarter from earlier days and knows the names—which are never "real" names, but professional names. No one knows any of the girls of those days, except for "Autumn Lass." Hightower makes a nice suggestion that there is always someone named "Autumn Lass." The choice of "Yan Terrace lines" is the strongest suggestion of unconsummated love—Li Shangyin never had sexual relations with "Willow Branch." In Yan Jidao the allusion suggests a relationship; in Zhou Bangyan it seems to suggest mere possibility.

He wonders what has become of her—he imagines scenes with lovers. He quotes Du Mu: "What happened is gone with the lone swan" (事與孤鴻去); but the allusion is a mere poetic gesture—Du Mu was referring to lost dynasties, not girlfriends.¹⁹ Whatever actually happened, Zhou Bangyan treats the girl as a lost love, whose memory brings "separation's pain" at whatever he sees. She is a courtesan, a "willow," and her absence leaves him—now at day's end—with only botanical willows lining the road—and now a garden, as in Yan Jidao's lyric, with the air filled with willow catkins (*xu* 絮), homophonous with 緒, "moments of feelings stirred." We will never know whether this is the lyricist recalling personal experience or, like a musician, playing a "variation on a theme."

Returning to the site where he first saw the beloved establishes the distance that so often characterizes the lyrics of this generation. Distance is also achieved by reflection and representation, taken up in one of his finest and most famous lyrics, a summer lyric to "Gepu lian jin pai" 隔浦蓮近拍. Qiang Huan refers to it in his preface to the Lishui edition in the Southern Song, and it was found written on a Yuan dynasty ceramic pillow.²⁰

19. QTs 28058.

20. Tang Guizhang 1999, 776; Sun Hong, 45. The ceramic pillow is mentioned in Wang Qiang (p. 127), in a discussion of an article in *Wenwu* 1977.1.

新篁搖動翠葆。曲徑通深窈。夏果收新脆，金丸落、驚飛鳥。
濃霧迷岸草。蛙聲鬧。驟雨鳴池沼。

水亭小。浮萍破處，簾花簷影顛倒。綸巾羽扇，困臥北窗清曉。
屏裏吳山夢自到。驚覺。依然身在江表。

A grove of new bamboo shakes kingfisher tassels.
The winding path leads through to deep recesses.
Of summer fruit, gather the fresh and crisp,
the golden ball falls,
startling a bird into flight.²¹
Dense haze hides the plants on the bank.
Frogs make a racket.
A sudden downpour makes sounds on the pool.
The pavilion by the water is small.
Where the duckweed gapes open,
reflections of flowers by the eaves and curtains are upside down.
With turban and feather fan
I lie woozy by the north window in clear dawn.
In dream I reach the mountains of Wu in the painted screen.
I wake with a start.
As before here I am in Beyond the River.

In some editions this appears with the occasional title: "Composed escaping the heat in Gushe Pavilion in the garden of Central Mountain County" 中山縣圃姑射亭避暑作. The occasional title places the lyricist in Lishui, south of modern Nanjing, certainly in the Southland, and with "mountains of Wu" all around. To miss this point may be to miss much of the pleasure of the lyric, which specifies "the mountains of Wu in the painted screen" rather than simply "the mountains of Wu," which are right there near Lishui, indeed in "Central Mountain County" where the dream takes place. The lyricist is smiling and pointing to the source of his smile, but his too-serious commentators cannot understand and think he should be dreaming of home not too far away in Hangzhou. They cannot see the difference between the mountains in a painted screen, in art, and in a Song administrative prefecture. He has already

21. The fruit is figured as the golden shot extravagantly used by young nobles for bird-hunting with slingshot crossbows.

made a landscape in the Song administrative prefecture into the lyricist's art, a magical landscape that turns out to be nothing more than a Song administrative prefecture.

The construction of the mood-inflected scene here deserves some comment. Its apparently disparate pieces are the construction of "art," leading our attention down along the winding path of the bamboo grove to the pool, which becomes a surface of reflection. In poetic criticism it is a scene constructed of moments of "stasis" (*jing* 靜), and "[stirring into] motion" (*dong* 動). The very first line marks the lyric as "artful," using a common figure marking artfulness in classical poetry, in which a normally intransitive usage is made transitive (often under the pressure of tonal requirements). "Shakes" (*yaodong* 搖動) can be used either intransitively or transitively, but a transitive usage grants agency, with the bamboo of the grove shaking their own tips. This motion resolves into the open space of the path that invites motion. The "winding" hides the destination. The implied motion brings us out of the bamboo grove to a plum tree, whose ripened fruits are the season marker. A falling yellow plum startles a bird into flight, its sound taken to be the pellet of a handheld slingshot-bow used in fowling. Motion sets off another motion, then leads to stillness in the misty pool, with the only sound the croaking of unseen frogs. That scene is broken by a sudden downpour that ends the stanza and sends us, in the beginning of the second stanza, into the shelter of a pavilion.

There is no human presence in the first stanza; the illusion of a fowler's shot turns out to be only a natural process. Indeed the lyricist does not "appear" until a space of reflection is opened in the pool, an open space in the waterplants, perhaps brought about by the sudden downpour. As with the fowler's shot we have the hint of violence in human presence that is dissipated. The turban and feather fan were the trademark of Zhuge Liang, the minister of Shu in the Three Kingdoms, calmly directing his forces in battle against the Wei general Sima Yi. In Su Shi's lyric on Red Cliff the fan was for Zhou Yu directing Wu's naval forces in the assault on Cao Cao. Here they are the props of the "woozy" and recumbent lyricist.

Landscape scenes on screens around a couch were, poetically, a favorite destination of dreamers. Zhou Bangyan travels to that destination,

a flat surface of representation like the reflecting pool, while his body is in stasis. Then the body wakes with a "start"—the same term as the "startled" bird—to find itself in Lishui. He refers to the place, however, as "Beyond of the River" (*jiangbiao* 江表), which certainly includes "the mountains of Wu." It may not be the same location in the territory, but the "mountains of Wu" were an idealized image of art, identifiable with no real mountains in Wu. One may read the closing image as the poet's missing his native Hangzhou, but it is more likely that the poem closes with a smile, opening his eyes to the real place rather than the image of art and the dreamer's imagination. He dreams of where he already is and loses that place on waking to find that he is there in Lishui, in a place that he has already artistically transformed in the first stanza into a site no less beautiful than the painter's "mountains of Wu." The screen's "mountains of Wu" are seen from a distance; he is, in Su Shi's famous words, "in the mountains."

The preceding lyric is distinctly Zhou Bangyan's in conception and execution, but we find the same care in constructing a scene when Zhou Bangyan does his own version of a standard Liu Yong *manci* on his travels, with the first stanza devoted to a mood-inflected scene and the second stanza recalling the beloved.²² The art of the lyric is constructing the present scene and linking it to memory. Few executed the Liu Yong pattern as well as Zhou Bangyan, as in "Qing chun gong" 慶春宮.²³

雲接平岡，山圍寒野，路回漸轉孤城。
 衰柳啼鴉，驚風驅雁，動人一片秋聲。
 倦途休駕，淡煙裏、微茫見星。
 塵埃憔悴，生怕黃昏，離思牽縈。
 華堂舊日逢迎。花豔參差，香霧飄零。
 弦管當頭，偏憐嬌鳳，夜深簧暖笙清。
 眼波傳意，恨密約、匆匆未成。
 許多煩惱，只為當時，一餉留情。

Clouds touch the plateau,
 mountains surround cold moors,

22. Indeed, the lyric was attributed to Liu Yong in *Caotang shiyu* 草堂詩餘.

23. Tang Guizhang 1999, 781; Sun Hong, 276. This is given as "Qing gong chun" 慶宮春 in Wang Qiang.

as the road turns, I gradually bend around the lone city wall.
 Cawing crows in ruined willows,
 gusts of wind drive on the geese,
 a stretch of autumn sounds that stir a person.
 On the weary road I halt my carriage,
 and in the filmy mist
 I faintly see the stars.
 Looking wretched in the dust
 I most fear the dusk,
 when thoughts of separation beset me.
 Greetings in the splendid halls of former days,
 the allure of flowers here and there,
 with fragrant fog drifting.
 Strings and pipes in front of us,
 I particularly felt love for Charming Phoenix,
 as night grew deep, the reeds warmed up
 and the mouth organ's notes were clear.
 Wavelike glances communicated intentions,
 but I resent that our secret tryst
 in our haste never came to pass.
 So much turmoil in the heart,
 just because of back then
 one moment of passion.

Perhaps the place to begin in thinking of a lyric like this is how the summation turns away from Liu Yong, who always wants to go back and does not reflect on his passion. If mood inflects the scene so artfully constructed, Zhou Bangyan locates the origin of mood in "one moment" (*yixiang* 一餉). If it were not for that "moment" the world he experiences might appear very different.

Although the scenes in *manci* are elaborate and relatively particularized in comparison with scenes in classical poetry, where they are usually bound by formal parallelism, they still consist of fragments, reflecting a schematic minimalism like some Southern Song painting. In the process of exposition, new elements are added that gradually shape a space and build patterns.

The first line is the figure of closing off the field of vision, with a special weight on the verb *jie* 接 ("touch"), focusing attention on the

margin of contact—in contrast to the more common poetic verb for such a scene, *lian* 連 (“stretch to”), a long vista up to a point of contact. Such closure becomes enclosure in the second line with *wei* 圍 (“surround”), with nothing enclosed but the poet in an autumn lowland. The figure of the enclosing wall of mountains is inverted in the city wall that seems to block him from going in, as the road winds around the wall’s exterior.

These blocking planes resolve into a more permeable space, a leaf-stripped willow in autumn, or more likely a whole line of such willows, which were conventionally used in song lyrics of springtime as planes that block or blur vision (for example, when they are described as *chong* 重, “layers”). Through this permeable autumnal plane come the cries of crows, picked up by the matching sounds of the wild geese above, which are described as *yipian* 一片 (a surface, a “stretch”).

The lyricist halts on his journey, and the recurring figures of blockage become still more permeable as stars dimly appear through the mist. This gradual opening of his enclosure, however, not only means the coming of night, but it also opens contact to the outside—elsewhere and the past—which brings thoughts of separation.

This oppressively isolated and enclosed autumnal scene finds its “outside” in the lyricist’s memory, as interior as the opening scene was exterior. It is within his mind, inside a “splendid hall,” as spring-like as the “cold moors” of the first stanza are autumnal. The same basic elements recur, but are transformed into the opposite of their form in the first stanza. There are “greetings” in contrast to the present isolation; there are beauties figured as flowers; and in contrast to the stars appearing in the filmy, cold mist, there is a “fragrant fog,” usually describing a woman’s hair but, characterized as *piaoling* 飄零 (“drifting”), moving lightly in the air, probably part of the less figurative “fog” created by the smoke of scented candles and lamps. The first stanza had cawing crows and the cries of migrating geese. The second stanza has music, and its “bird” is Charming Phoenix. The sound of the reed organ improves as its reed grows warm, and its music signifies a general “warming up.”

At last glances are exchanged, in an act of anticipating even warmer moments—but then something goes wrong. We don’t know what it was, only that it was *congcong* 匆匆 (“haste”), a flustered confusion. If Liu Yong’s heart was tied to his loves in the capital, it was for more than an

unconsummated glance. It is not always the case with Zhou Bangyan, but the later lyricist is bound not by the memory of pleasure and affection, but by the one moment of desire, and the fact that its completion “never came to pass” (*weicheng* 未成). At least Zhou Bangyan is aware of the disproportion—all this gloominess, these sleepless nights, this longing, all because of one single moment.

The motif of loss in most earlier lyrics was expressed as a desire for repetition, with significant resonance in the nature of love and the genre of song lyric, which lives by the repetition of song. The forces of high literature on song lyric were, in this period, trying to turn it into a “document,” in the sense that all *classical* literature is “document.” Unlike things that repeat, the “document” belongs to a unique moment. Su Shi documented himself so well that his words are always “Su Shi’s words,” delivered at such and such a time in such and such a place, under such and such circumstances. Lyrics had been different; the singer might or might not mean those words, but they were not a “document” referring us to their composer, whoever he or she might have been.

It is not the lyricist’s desire to go back to how it was, but to go back to how it was and bring it to a good conclusion. That can happen no more than perfect repetition. He is on a road, constrained by walls. That road is subjectively determined by an earlier “wrong turn.” It all was determined by a moment.

Figures of Blockage

In his *Remarks on Lyrics From the Human World* (*Renjian cihua* 人間詞話), Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877–1927) makes a famous distinction between *ge* 隔 and *buge* 不隔 (roughly “blocked” and “not blocked”).²⁴ It is tempting to translate *buge* (“not blocked”) abstractly as “immediate”—and that is clearly part of what he means. But *ge* (“blocked”) also includes figuration and the marks of conscious artistry, which are often accompanied by figures of blockage and displacement, which are obvious

24. Shi Yidui 施議對, *Renjian cihua yizhu* 人間詞話譯注 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2003), 69.

in the preceding lyric. The relationship between the lyricist-lover and the beloved is reduced to a brief exchange of glances, which gives him an identity outside and beyond that of a purely social being, an identity as a lover and poet. It strongly recalls Dante's sight of Beatrice in *La Vita Nuova*, when, after seeing her in adolescence, he goes back to his room and starts writing poetry (which he then circulates in the community). It no less recalls Petrarch, for whom the sighting of Laura is commemorated in a poetic recitation of the precise date and time when he "entered into the labyrinth from which I see no exit." However much Wang Guowei may prefer the lyric that is "not blocked"—a condition that can be named only in the negative, like "immediate"—blockage is necessary to be a "poet" of a certain sort.

In one his finest and most characteristic lyrics, to "Fengliuzi" 風流子, Zhou Bangyan seems to be literally standing in front of a wall that separates him from the beloved.²⁵

新綠小池塘。風簾動、碎影舞斜陽。
羨金屋去來，舊時巢燕，土花繚繞，前度莓牆。
繡閣鳳幃深幾許，曾聽得理絲簧。
欲說又休，應乖芳信，未歌先咽，愁近清觴。
遙知新妝了，開朱戶，應自待月西廂。
最苦夢魂，今宵不到伊行。
問甚時說與，佳音密耗，寄將秦鏡，偷換韓香。
天便教人，霎時廝見何妨。

New green, a small pool.
Breeze stirs the curtains,
shattered reflections dance in the setting sunlight.
I envy how they come and go in the gilded chamber,
the swallows of former times,
and the mosses entwine
lichen walls of when I was here before.
From how deep behind
the ornate chamber's phoenix hangings
did I listen to strings and woodwinds being played?
She was about to speak, then stopped,
concerned that their sweet communication would fail,

25. Tang Guizhang 1999, 768; Sun Hong, 16.

and before she could sing she choked up,
 worried about drawing near the clear goblet of ale.
 From afar I know that when her new makeup is finished,
 she opens the vermillion door
 and must be awaiting the moon on the western porch.
 What most troubles me is that my dreaming soul
 won't reach her tonight.
 I wonder when I will be able to tell her
 the loving words, the secret message,
 sending Qin Jia's mirror,
 secretly getting Han Shou's incense in return.
 What's to stop Heaven from right now letting
 us meet just for a little while?

Let us begin by noting that the poet only "seems to be" standing in front of a wall, able to see the curtains and hear the beloved, but unable to cross those barriers. He claims to have been there before (*qiandu* 前度, the same phrase used in "young Liu, here before," discussed earlier), implying return, but we don't know if he is there or even if there really is a beloved. In common Chinese poetics, the situation stirs the poet's feelings and he creates the lyric; but perhaps the situation is simply a necessary construct to enable the lyric and to allow him to be a lyricist of a certain sort.

The first line and rhyme period simply names and qualifies the pool. In some Chinese paintings a complex form is represented by one or two stylized brush strokes, a process by which painting is allied to writing and which reduces particulars to class concepts. Likewise, in this highly coded poetic language these few words are categorical instantiations of meaning. "New green" effectively means "spring," setting a mood and perhaps telling us the season when the lyric could be appropriately sung. "A small pool" tells us the location is a garden, close to a dwelling, but not "inside." It may also be a space of reflection.

From the time and setting we move to the focus of attention, a curtain, the plane that divides outside from inside. We cannot tell whether he is looking at the actual curtain or the reflection of the curtain in the pool. The breeze would ripple the curtain, but also the water in which the curtain is reflected. *Ying* 影, translated as "reflections" in relation to the

pool, is also "shadows," presumably of someone behind the curtain. Either the rippling curtain or the rippling pool could catch the late afternoon sunlight, disrupting the "reflections"/"shadows."

The swallows are familiar poetic figures for mated pairs, often, as here, invoking human alienation. Not only do the birds fly and nest together, but they are able to pass with seasonal regularity into the lady's chamber. Such reliable natural regularity contrasts with the way in which human relationships and fates change. But most important, they can cross that barrier. His "envy" (*xian* 羨) tells us that he cannot penetrate the barrier.

If the swallows returning in spring are from "former times," the "previous visit" tells us that he too has returned. The specific phrasing of a "previous visit" (*qiandu* 前度) unmistakably recalls Liu Yuxi's "young Liu, here before" (前度劉郎). Like Liu Chen, who visited the goddess and, having left, could never find his way back to her, the speaker seems to suggest that on his earlier visit, he crossed through to the inside. The permeable curtain is replaced by a more substantial wall, the sort of wall lovers in stories have to cross to reach their beloved. The wall is covered with moss and lichens, marking disuse.

He cannot get inside, but the sound of music comes out. In the scene that follows he witnesses what he cannot then see. Chinese does not mark tense, and a sudden unmarked move into memory is not uncommon. We could take the rest of the stanza as happening in the present, inferring what is going on within, but the unmistakable "parting scene" invites us to shift to the past tense. We can hear the echoes of the parting scene in Yuan Zhen's "Yingying's Story" ("Yingying zhuan" 鶯鶯傳):

"You have always claimed that I am good at playing the zither, but I have always been so shy that I couldn't bring myself to play for you. Now that you are going to leave, I will fulfill this heartfelt wish of yours." Thereupon she brushed her fingers over the zither, playing the prelude to "Coats of Feathers, Rainbow Skirts." But after only a few notes, the sad notes became so unsettled by bitter pain that the melody could no longer be recognized. All present were sobbing, and Yingying abruptly stopped and threw down the zither, tears streaming down her face.

Since Yingying is a daughter from a respectable family, she is not permitted to sing, especially not to instrumental accompaniment. Zhou Bangyan's beloved is apparently not a genteel zither player and cannot communicate feelings except in song, and is so overcome with emotion that she chokes up and cannot sing.

Indeed the beloved, figured as Cui Yingying, opens the second stanza, not in memory but as the speculative model. Cui Yingying writes a poem to Zhang inviting him to a secret meeting with her:

I await the moon on the western porch,
 my door half ajar, facing the breeze.
 Flower shadows stir, brushing the wall—
 I wonder if this is my lover coming.

We know the story of Cui Yingying was evolving, and Zhou Bangyan is clearly not thinking of what happened in "Yingying's Story," where Zhang climbed the wall and entered the "door half ajar," only to receive an elaborate scolding by Yingying for his indecent behavior. This seems to be another lyric on revisiting the dwelling of the beloved, but now he can get no closer than the wall. Zhou Bangyan knows "from afar" that this is what she must be doing—because that's how the story is supposed to go. The problem is that any attempt to map his putative experiences onto the standard love narrative breaks down without heroic feats of ingenuity. We know that "awaiting the moon in the western porch" means waiting for her lover, who must be the speaker, judging from the following rhyme period. But in the first stanza he now seems unable to reach her at twilight, and seems once to have been with her and left her. We have no idea under what circumstances she might be waiting for him—has she done this every moonlit night since he left?

In short, there is no story. Zhou Bangyan is playing with the motifs of separated lovers, and those motifs have only one rule—the lovers cannot get together. He can't even reach her in dream. All that remains is the desired future. But what is it exactly that he wants? In Liu Yong's "Ding fengbo," which supposedly offended the sensibilities of Yan Shu, we know what the young wife wanted: she wanted to be near her young husband all the time in a blissful everyday life. In the *manci* of his travels,

it's clear what Liu Yong wants: he wants to go back and resume a life of love and pleasure with one (or more) of his beloveds.

By contrast, Zhou Bangyan envisages only a moment of communication, just as everything depended on a single glance in the preceding lyric. In the scene of memory, the beloved was about to speak, then stopped. Zhou Bangyan wants to tell her "the good words, the private message" (*jiayin mihao* 佳音密耗). What he wants to say remains "private." Communication is accompanied by an exchange: the mirror the Eastern Han poet Qin Jia sent to his wife, and the rare incense that Jia Chong's daughter gave to the clerk Han Shou, whom she loved. Jia Chong recognized the scent on Han Shou and had the two marry. Are we to read these allusions as a proposal of marriage (unthinkable), or are these simply marks of deep love? What is clear from the surprisingly vernacular closing is that moment when the barrier breaks down for "just a little while" so that genuine communication—the content of which is excluded from lyric—can occur. Here we might recall the "one moment" of the glance at the end of the preceding lyric.

If we return to Wang Guowei's distinction between "blocked" and "not blocked," this prime lyricist of the "blocked" seeks only the moment of being "unblocked." It can be only a moment, because it involves breaking through some barrier, allowing for meeting and speaking the truth of the heart. It acquires its value and importance by virtue of the barrier; once the barrier is breached it becomes banal. Zhou Bangyan meets his beloved and says, "I love you"; his beloved says, "I love you too." The barrier is as necessary to love as it is to writing good song lyrics. There are a few, very rare moments of contentment in Zhou Bangyan's slim corpus, but by and large the barrier stays in place.

This was one of Zhou Bangyan's best-known lyrics, and as with Qin Guan, there was a community that sought a frame narrative to make a "blocked" lyric a little less blocked and to spin a story to explain the blockage. According to Wang Mingqing's 王明清 (1127–1202) *Accounts of Brushing Away the Dust* (*Huichen lu* 揮麈錄), the story is that when Zhou Bangyan was magistrate of Lishui, he was attracted to the wife of the assistant magistrate, and this lyric was written to convey his feelings.²⁶ Of course, no Song official would have his wife singing for

26. Sun Hong, 20.

guests—so maybe she was the assistant magistrate's favorite singer. . . . And now we are back to the Qin Guan anecdote of Emerald Peach.

Weariness

Such intensity wears out readers and must have also exhausted the lyricist. Zhou Bangyan was magistrate in Lishui from 1093–96, in his late thirties. The following lyric to “Man tingfang” is one of the few to which Zhou Bangyan added a note on the occasion: “A summer, composed at Wuxiang Mountain in Lishui” 夏日溧水無想山作.²⁷

風老鶯雛，雨肥梅子，午陰嘉樹清圓。地卑山近，衣潤費爐煙。
人靜鳥鶯自樂，小橋外、新綠濺濺。憑欄久，黃蘆苦竹，擬泛九江船。
年年。如社燕，飄流瀚海，來寄修椽。且莫思身外，長近尊前。
憔悴江南倦客，不堪聽、急管繁弦。歌筵畔，先安簟枕，容我
醉時眠。

The breeze has aged fledgling orioles,
rain has fattened the plums,
noon shadows cast by fine trees, cool and round.
The land is low, the mountain near,
clothes' wetness wastes the brazier's smoke.²⁸
The person is still, ravens and carrion birds take delight,
and past the little bridge
 new green splashes on.
Leaning a long time on the railing,
yellow reeds and bitter bamboo,
I consider sailing in that Jiujiang boat.
Year after year,
Like the spring festival swallows,
winging wind-tossed toward the desert
to come lodge in the long rafters.
For the while don't think of what is not close at hand,
always stay close to the wine-cup.

27. Tang Guizhang 1999, 775; Sun Hong, 99.

28. The brazier is evidently used to dry clothes dampened by the steamy air.

Worn out, weary sojourner in the Southland,
 I cannot bear to listen to
 the shrill pipes and swiftly-strummed strings.
 At the banquet with song
 I set out mat and pillow beforehand
 to permit me to sleep when I get drunk.

This "Man ting fang" begins the summer section of the 1211 edition, just as "Rui long yin" begins the spring section. In the chapter on Qin Guan I noted how Qin Guan made use of Tang poetry. This was characteristic of most lyricists of song lyric proper from the last part of the eleventh century on. The 1211 edition of Zhou Bangyan represents a further stage in the legitimization of song lyric: it is, as its title advertises, "Annotated in Detail" (*xiangzhu* 詳註), its pages resembling an edition of classical poetry, loaded with quotation of sources for Zhou Bangyan's lines.

In the opening of the lyric above, Chen Yuanlong, the annotator, noticed only the phrase from Du Fu in the second line and another from Liu Yuxi in the third line. Subsequent commentators demonstrated their mettle by filling in the references missed. Luo Kanglie (1985) annotated the first line with a reference to Sikong Tu's 司空圖 (837–908) "Five Poems Written Casually" 偶書五首:²⁹

色變鶯雛長，竿齊粉籜垂。

The colors change, fledgling orioles grow up,
 Canes even, powdery bamboo sheaths dangle.

Luo Kanglie (2008) revises this to an earlier reference preferred by Sun and others, a couplet from Du Mu's "Describing How It Was in a Morning Scene When First Entering Biankou on My Way to the Capital, Sent Ahead to Li, Director of the Bureau of Military Appointments" 赴京初入汴口曉景即事先寄兵部李郎中:³⁰

29. QTs 34594.

30. QTs 20850.

露蔓蟲絲多，風浦燕雛老。

On dewy vines, insect silk abounds,
by windy shores, fledgling swallows age.

This somewhat comic decision regarding which couplet is the appropriate source conceals a more interesting truth. What we have is not a special characteristic of song lyric, but a continuation of early poetic practice in which nice images were continuously reused and reconfigured for better poetic effect in a couplet. As with the "painstaking composition" (*kuyin* 苦吟) of the ninth through early eleventh century, this is less allusion to earlier "poems" than working with poetic "material." It is rather different from Huang Tingjian's practice in classical poetry, which often invited attention to precisely how Huang had changed his sources. Zhou Bangyan's striking success was in taking this material and using "to age" (*lao* 老) as a transitive verb rather than as a stative verb, "to be old." But since Du Fu had already used "fatten" as a transitive verb, the possibility was invited by parallelism. Compare the flatness of an earlier usage in song lyric in the opening of Du Anshi's "Du Wei niang" 杜韋娘:³¹

暮春天氣，鶯老燕子忙如織。

The weather at the end of spring,
Orioles age, and the swallows are as busy as if weaving.

or the closing of a lyric to Du's "Feng xi wu" 鳳棲梧:³²

春殘鶯老人千里。

Spring fades away, orioles age, the person a thousand leagues away.

or perhaps the opening of a lyric to Du's "Juhua xin" 菊花新:³³

31. Tang Guizhang 1999, 228.

32. Tang Guizhang 1999, 229.

33. Tang Guizhang 1999, 235.

怎奈花殘又鶯老。

What can be done about the flowers fading and orioles aging?

From the small collection of a supremely mediocre lyricist we learn that "orioles aging" is no longer from a Tang poem, but had become a late spring cliché.

Zhou Bangyan's opening is a very stylish season marker. But when he says "the land is low, the mountains near" and refers to the pervasive dampness in the following line, the situation rather than the word choice evokes one of the most famous poems in the language, Bai Juyi's "Song of the Pipa" 琵琶引.³⁴

住近湓江地低濕，黃蘆苦竹繞宅生。

I live near the Pen River
where land is low and wet,
yellow reeds and bitter bamboo
grow all around my house.

We need to pause a moment and reflect why these simple lines would leave an impression quite apart from the very famous poem that contains them. Once a member of the Chinese elite entered the civil service, his life would not be his own again until he retired. Positions in the capital and the great cities were desirable, even with low rank. But officials were needed for the whole empire, and by way of punishment or sheer staffing necessity, one could easily get sent to one dismal town after another throughout the course of a career. Lishui, south of Nanjing, was hot and wet—there are modern images of the place that evoke the words of the lyric. Although the characterization of the land being "low and wet" primarily refers to Bai Juyi, behind it lies the darker use of the phrase by the Han writer Jia Yi 賈誼 to characterize his place of exile in Changsha and his fear he would die there. This shadow of death may help to explain the strange delight of the ravens and carrion birds. But soon the Bai Juyi poem returns in exact words: "yellow reeds and

34. QIs 22341.

bitter bamboo" and a reference to Bai Juyi's exile in Jiujiang, in Jiangxi Province, well southwest of Lishui.

Zhou Bangyan is, by the associations he is making, "drifting into" the "Song of the Pipa." There Bai Juyi, seeing off a guest, hears someone playing a pipa and recognizes the skill and style as training in the capital. Reluctantly the player, a lone woman, is invited to their boat, where she plays for them and tells her story. She was once famous in the Entertainment Quarter of Chang'an, but as she got older, her popularity diminished and she became the wife of a traveling merchant, currently absent. Bai Juyi makes the analogy with his own situation, complains about Jiujiang and its music, asks her to play again and weeps copiously. Zhou Bangyan knows that Bai Juyi went on to hold very desirable posts, and lived out a long and comfortable life.

If the second stanza of the summer lyric invokes spring swallows, it suggests the mobility of the official, without the regularity of the swallows. What follows is a more purposeful use of Du Fu's fourth "Haphazard Inspirations: Quatrains":³⁵

莫思身外無窮事，且盡生前有限杯。

Don't brood on the endless concerns
beyond what's close at hand,
and finish the limited number of cups
in the time while you're alive.

Drifting into the "Song of the Pipa" is also drifting into classical poetry's world of worrying about one's career and this dismal appointment as a magistrate in Lishui, worse than Bai Juyi's appointment to Jiujiang, and with none of Bai Juyi's prospects for a better future. In the world of song lyric one can long for the lost beloved. Zhou Bangyan uses Du Fu to break free of the analogy, but the spirit comes from song lyric, Yan Shu's lyric to "Huan xi sha": "Mountains and rivers fill our eyes, but care is wasted on things too far" (滿目山河空念遠). It is better to get drunk.

After hearing the former entertainer from the capital and reflecting on his own situation, Bai Juyi denounces local music:

35. QTs 11215.

豈無山歌與村笛，嘔啞嘲哢難為聽。

Of course there are the mountain songs
as well as village flutes,
wailing and screeching,
hard to listen to.

Zhou Bangyan's rejection of the local music is not so extreme—Lishui may be rustic, but it is not as far away and alien as Jiujiang in Jiangxi—but he still doesn't care for it. He plans to go to the party just to drink and sleep it off:

I cannot bear to listen to
the shrill pipes and swiftly-strummed strings.
By the stage for song
I set out mat and pillow beforehand
to permit me to sleep when I get drunk.

Perhaps the most interesting thing here is the planning and staging of drunkenness.

One of the most popular topics for song lyric was the Lantern Festival, held on the first full moon of the year, the fifteenth day of the first lunar month. The usual curfew in the capital Bianjing was suspended on that night, as well as on the nights before and after it. Residents of the city went out at night to enjoy themselves; and it was, at least, the imagined occasion of erotic encounters. Zhou Bangyan's most famous Lantern Festival lyric, to "Jie yu hua" 解語花, follows a standard pattern for lyricists in the provinces, first describing the local Lantern Festival, then recalling the more splendid Lantern Festival in Bianjing.³⁶

風銷絳蠟，露浥紅蓮，燈市光相射。桂華流瓦。
纖雲散，耿耿素娥欲下。衣裳淡雅。看楚女、纖腰一把。
簫鼓喧，人影參差，滿路飄香麝。
因念都城放夜。望千門如畫，嬉笑遊冶。鈿車羅帕。

36. Tang Guizhang 1999, 784; Sun Hong, 239.

相逢處，自有暗塵隨馬。年光是也。唯只見、舊情衰謝。
清漏移，飛蓋歸來，從舞休歌罷。

The wind melts crimson wax,
dew moistens red lotus lanterns,
beams of light shoot back and forth in the lantern sector.
Moon-sparkle flows on the roof-tiles.
Wispy clouds disperse,
and the radiant pale-clad maiden will descend.³⁷
Their clothing plain and tasteful.
I watch Chu girls,
 their slender waists one hand-clasp in girth.
Pipes and drums make noise,
shadows of people every which way,
and the scent of musk wafts, filling the road.
Then I think back on the night without curfew in the capital.
I gazed on a thousand gates as if in daylight,
merry laughter, roaming for pleasure.
Inlaid carriages with gossamer handkerchiefs.
When people met each other,
There was, of course, concealing dust following the horses.
It's that time of year again.
But I just find
 that old feeling fading away.
The clear sound of the water-clock moves on
and I send my coach speeding home,
letting the dancing be over and the songs cease.

Zhou Bangyan stages his scene artfully. Up close it is a scene of light in darkness, with the artificial lights, the lanterns, one after another tossed by wind and made wet by dew, while from a distance it is a landscape of many lights, casting their glow in all directions. Coming from a world where light at night is commonplace, it may be hard for us to grasp the visual impact of this scene, with its lanterns concentrated here in this one area of the city, casting shadows in disarray, suggesting the wonderful disorder of social restraints imagined in that night.

37. The moon goddess Chang E, hence moonlight.

What, however, are we to make of the lyricist who constructs the lively scene of pleasure and desire that is characteristic of Lantern Festival lyrics, only to declare in the closing his disinterest in it? It is no wonder that he is considered somehow "later" than his contemporaries. There may be something here that touches on the immense attraction his lyrics held for the Southern Song. In his intensely self-conscious artfulness there is already something that distances the reader from the scene of pleasure. He compounds this with a move that was very satisfying in the Chinese tradition of biographical reading, an implicit claim of aging: "But I just find that old feeling fading away." If we think of the scene of desire as Liu Yong's "advertising," we have here something like the "aesthetic," contemplating something potentially desirable from a position where there is no desire. It is not the pure absence of desire, but the negation of desire. At the end he pulls down the curtain on the most beguiling moment of the year matter-of-factly, with no nostalgia or regret.

IV

Into the Twelfth Century

THIRTEEN

Recovering a History

In the mid-eleventh century song lyric had a past, but not yet a history. Lyrics attributed to Tang and Five Dynasties figures were occasionally mentioned in remarks on poetry and miscellanies. Feng Yansi (or lyrics circulating under his name) was known, but his lyrics were still part of a contemporary repertoire. Li Yu was mentioned in anecdotes, with his lyrics cited. We have a thirteenth-century bibliographical notice of one late tenth-century anthology of Tang and Five Dynasties lyrics, *Jiayan ji*, but its only mention is in Chen Zhensun's thirteenth-century bibliography, and we do not know how widely it circulated. We know that the *Huajian ji* survived, but there is no credible reference to it before around the turn of the twelfth century.

In the last decades of the eleventh century we begin to see a growing interest in Tang and Five Dynasties song lyric. This is clear in Su Shi's work. We have seen him take a verse by Zhang Zhihe and, commenting that the melody did not survive, rewrite it for a current melody. He apparently did not consider the possibility that it may not have had an independent tune in the same way Song dynasty lyric came to have. In the famous lyric to "Dongxiang ge" 洞仙歌 he builds on remembered lines of a lyric by Huairui Furen 花蕊夫人, consort of the last ruler of the Latter Shu kingdom.¹ One of the most interesting cases was when

1. Zou and Wang, 413. Here I will avoid the long controversy regarding whether the actual lyric by Huarui Furen survived independently.

he renamed a Five Dynasties tune title, previously "Yi xian zi" 憶仙姿, because he thought it inelegant; the new title "Ru meng ling" 如夢令 ("Like a dream") became instantly popular for *xiaoling* in the Five Dynasties style.²

Although He Zhu engaged primarily in reusing pieces of Tang classical poems, he also reworked lines from Tang song lyrics, a practice that became increasingly common around the turn of the twelfth century. We have the first incontestable reference to *Huajian ji* by name around the same time. This occurs in a colophon by Li Zhiyi, on the lyrics of Wu Ke 吳可 (Wu Sidao 吳思道), who apparently devoted himself to composing lyrics based on the *Huajian* model.³ Not only is *Huajian ji* Wu Ke's standard in song lyric, but Li Zhiyi also refers to the anthology as if it were common knowledge. Chao Qianzhi's 1148 colophon to the Shaoxing reign printed edition of *Huajian ji* suggests several texts in circulation at the time; Chao corrects and prints (正而復刊) the anthology on the basis of what seems to have been a manuscript copy.

A sense of a genre's history is not just a body of texts with attributed authors who can be dated; it involves thinking of the genre as a sequence, comprised of differences and changes.⁴ We find this first in Li Zhiyi's colophon for the lyrics of Wu Ke. It begins with a general statement on the genre, followed by a series of judgments that outline a rough narrative. In this it resembles Li Qingzhao's brief "Discourse on Song Lyric," ("Cilun" 詞論). It is possible, but rather unlikely, that the "Discourse on Song Lyric" appeared earlier.⁵ It also seems unlikely that Li Qingzhao knew Li Zhiyi's colophon, since in this period colophons seem to have circulated only in an intimate circle. Li Zhiyi's collected works were

2. Zou and Wang, 546.

3. Zhang Huimin, 200. Wu Ke's extant works include *Canghai shihua* 藏海詩話 and poems (QSS 13012ff). Wu Ke's dates are unknown. The ostensibly earlier, but contestable, case of mentioning *Huajian ji* is the colophon by Cui Gongdu, the problems related to which I discuss in Appendix A: "The Manuscripts of Feng Yansi."

4. Wu Zeng cites a series of judgments by Chao Buzhi on earlier and contemporary lyricists, but these are not linked as a history. Tang Guizhang 1986, 125.

5. The argument that Li Qingzhao's discourse on lyric is an early work hangs on the slender evidence of her failure to mention Zhou Bangyan. If Zhou Bangyan was not as prominent as was commonly believed, that argument fails. Moreover, her reference to Su Shi and his major protégés would have most comfortably awaited the Southern Song and the relaxation of the proscription of the works of Su Shi and his followers.

published only in the second half of the twelfth century (the first section appearing in 1167, with the colophons certainly relegated to a later section).⁶

Li Zhiyi was a follower of Su Shi and was a friend of Huang Tingjian and Qin Guan. He was, as we have seen, also close to He Zhu. As a figure at the very center of contemporary song lyric, his importance lies in his large collection of colophons, some of which are on song lyrics and collections of song lyric.

While the colophon for Wu Ke's song lyrics is not dated, Li Zhiyi also wrote a colophon for Wu's classical poems, dated 1115. It is likely that the colophon for the song lyrics was not too widely separated in time from this colophon. By 1115 we are well into Huizong's reign and only thirty-three years before the publication of the Shaoxing edition of *Huajian ji*.⁷

跋吳思道小詞

長短句于遺詞中最為難工，自有一種風格，稍不如格，便覺齟齬。唐人但以詩句，而下用和聲抑揚以就之，若今之歌陽關是也。至唐末遂因其聲之長短句，而以意填之，始一變以成音律，大抵以花間集中所載為宗，然多小闕。至柳耆卿始鋪敘展衍，備足無餘，形容盛明，千載如逢當日。較之花間所集，韻終不勝，由是知其為難能也。張子野獨矯拂而振起之，雖刻意追逐，要是才不足而情有餘，良可佳者。晏元憲、歐陽文忠、宋景文，則以其餘力遊戲，而風流閒雅，超出意表，又非其類也。諦味研究，字字皆有據。而其妙見于卒章，語盡而意不盡，意盡而情不盡，豈平平可得彷彿哉。思道殫思精詣，專以花間所集為準，其自得處，未易咫尺可論。苟輔之以晏歐陽宋而取舍于張柳，其進也將不可得而禦矣。

Li Zhiyi, Colophon on the Song Lyrics of Wu Sida (Wu Ke)

The choice and arrangement of words in a song lyric are the absolutely hardest things to do with success. It [song lyric] has its own particular kind of style; and even the slightest deviation from the pattern makes one immediately realize that it is off. In the Tang they just took lines of classical poems and used the modulations of filler words to match the tune—the sort of thing we do now in singing “Yang Pass.” When we come to the

6. Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書, *Songren bieji xulu* 宋人別集敘錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1999), 543.

7. Zhang Huimin, 200.

end of the Tang, they followed the long and short line-phrasing of the melody and filled it with purposeful content. For the first time there was a transformation by having rules of sound. In general what is contained in the *Huajian ji* is the revered ancestor. Nevertheless they are mostly short works.

When we come to Liu Yong, for the first time the exposition develops fully, replete and without surplus, giving the image of the era's splendor, and for a thousand years it will be like being in those times. But in comparison to what is collected in the *Huajian ji*, he could not carry on their euphony. From this we can know how hard it is to be good at it. Zhang Xian alone rectified this and gave the form momentum. But even though he used every effort in pursuit of it, the long and short of it is that even inadequate talent with an abundance of feeling still can be quite enjoyable. Yan Shu, Ouyang Xiu, and Song Qi⁸ amused themselves in their spare time, yet their panache and easy grace transcended expectation, even though it was not their sort of thing. If you savor their lyrics carefully and reflect on them, every single word has a basis. Yet their wondrousness is revealed in the closing, where the words end but the meaning does not end, or the meaning ends but the mood does not end—how can average work catch even a vague likeness?

Sidao thinks intensely on getting the quintessence, and he exclusively takes what is collected in *Huajian ji* as his standard. Where he feels content with his work, it is not easy to cavil over minor points. If he [Wu Sidao] could supplement it with Yan Shu, Ouyang Xiu, and Song Qi, while getting some things from Zhang Xian and Liu Yong, then he would be unstoppable in his progress.

Li Zhiyi begins with what is obvious to any reader of song lyric: composing a song lyric was a more perilous enterprise than composing a classical poem. A competent (though not outstanding) classical poem is still readable, but unless a song lyric is perfect, it sounds "off." Anticipating Li Qingzhao, Li Zhiyi observes in his own way that "it has its own particular kind of style" (自有一種風格). The *ge* 格 of "style" (*fengge* 風格) is the term used alone as "pattern" ("the slightest devia-

8. Note that the pairing of Song Qi with Yan Shu also occurs in a Huang Tingjian colophon to Wang Guanfu's lyrics. As with his poetics in classical poetry, Huang Tingjian tells Wang Guanfu that he must "read [their works] until he is thoroughly familiar with them" (熟讀). Here, as elsewhere in the period, song lyric can be described very much as a purely textual form. Zhang Huimin, 200.

tion from pattern" 稍不如格). This suggests that Li Zhiyi means something that includes but is more general than simply following the tonal pattern of a melody exactly. Like Li Qingzhao, he cannot describe it precisely—beyond saying that it is distinct.

According to Li Zhiyi, in the Tang they simply sang classical poems, with "filler words" (*hesheng* 和聲) added to match the melody. Given the difference between the tune patterns and the tonal regulation of classical poetry, we have reason to believe Tang singers could do a great deal more, using techniques genetically related to Song *yinkuo*, in which a classical poem is redone as a lyric, or to the "Tiaoxiao" 調笑 performance, in which a classical poem is given first, followed by a version in song lyric.

For Li Zhiyi song lyric proper emerged around the end of the Tang, with verses composed for particular melodies. Perhaps the best way to understand this is as poets appropriating the practice of singers. Here we find the *Huajian ji* lyrics treated as *zong* 宗, translated as "revered ancestor." What is omitted is significant. In this period we might not expect to find Li Yu, who was then admired as a tragic, sometimes blameworthy figure known to have written song lyrics. The obvious missing figure, however, is Feng Yansi, whose lyric style was so close to that of Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu (indeed sharing lyrics with them) that his inclusion would have complicated the narrative of change Li Zhiyi sought.

The criticism of the *Huajian ji* lyricists is the brevity of their lyrics, a "flaw" obviously chosen to open a space for "progress" (*jin* 進) in the *manci* of Liu Yong. Yan Shu, Ouyang Xiu, and Song Qi used many of the same short tunes as the *Huajian ji* lyricists did. Liu Yong allowed a lyric to develop more fully, but in the process failed in the "euphony" (*yun* 韻, or "rhymes," "resonance," even "flair"). Then we have Zhang Xian, who succeeded in correcting Liu Yong's failing, but was short on talent. Recognition of talent is obvious in the evaluation of Yan Shu, Ouyang Xiu, and Song Qi.

If this is the first statement of the history of the genre, at the end we see it in the context of an even more profound change. Just as a classical poet might choose a particular Tang or pre-Tang precursor as his notional model, in his lyric composition Wu Ke has adopted the same

relation to song lyric, going back to the earliest and "purest" example of the form. Li Zhiyi's recitation of song lyric's history is to encourage a different relation to tradition, more akin to the poetics of Huang Tingjian, drawing on an understanding of the tradition as a whole to make use of their different strengths.

The question then arises: where are Su Shi, Qin Guan, He Zhu, and the other lyricists of the late eleventh century—all literary friends of Li Zhiyi and much admired by him? One could explain their absence by placing the colophon for the lyrics significantly earlier than 1115, but one would have to go a long way to reach the time when the influence of the major late eleventh-century lyricists was not felt (the colophon to the lyrics is clearly from the time when Wu Ke was alive, and the colophon to his classical poems also seems to be). The better explanation is in the scholarly relation to composition assumed in the colophon: the question is using the past of a genre in the present, not using present masters.

Without pressing too hard the case that Li Zhiyi's colophon was composed earlier than Li Qingzhao's "Discourse," let me suggest that we consider a trajectory from Li Zhiyi, probably writing in the 1110s, to Li Qingzhao, and finally to Wang Zhuo's *Biji manzhi* (1149). While some of the differences are purely based on individual judgments, such a trajectory corresponds to other changes in aficionado understanding of song lyric during that interval.

As we have seen earlier, one large question in play around the turn of the twelfth century was whether song was basically like "poetry" (*shi*), which we have been translating as "classical poetry." Su Shi had, at one point, said explicitly that song lyric was indeed poetry—but fortunately no one cited this comment. We see the question being debated in Chen Shidao's statement that Su Shi wrote song lyric as classical poetry, or in Chao Buzhi's declaration that Huangjian's lyrics were just singing good poems to a tune. Both comments presume that there should be a basic difference. Li Zhiyi begins his colophon by stressing that difference. Li Qingzhao's "Discourse on Song Lyric" makes that difference the heart of her argument, leading to her most famous statement on the genre: *cibieshi yijia* 詞別是一家, which we may translate as "song lyric is a differ-

ent family altogether.”⁹ We should put this statement in its context. She condemns Yan Shu, Ouyang Xiu, and Su Shi in one breath as great scholars who wrote classical poems in heterometric lines, which often did not match the requirements of the melody. Then she restates her point with two authors less famous for their song lyrics than Yan Shu—Ouyang Xiu and Su Shi:

王介甫、曾子固，文章似西漢，若作一小歌詞，則人必絕倒，不可讀也。
乃知詞別是一家，知之者少。

The classical prose writings of Wang Anshi and Zeng Gong resemble the Western Han, but if they write a little song lyric, people always break into uncontrollable laughter—they can’t be read out loud. From this we understand that song lyric is a different family altogether, and those who understand it are few.

In other words, song lyric is not just another “genre” sharing the same basic values of all classical literature.

The choice of phrasing as “a family” (*yijia* 一家) was immensely resonant. The earliest version is a statement by Sima Qian (ca. 135–86 BCE) on his hopes to complete the great history of China up to his own time, to “become the discourse of one family” (*yijia zhi yan* 一家之言). Since he had undergone castration in order to complete this work begun by his father, it was the termination of the patriline. Variations on the phrase *yijia* 一家 had by the eleventh century come to refer not to a “family” but to distinctively original works of literature by an individual, hence the phrase in Su Dongpo’s letter to Xianyu Shen, cited earlier, about his own lyrics: “they are of their own kind [family]” 亦自是一家.¹⁰ Li Qingzhao again changed the meaning of *yijia* to a collective, “doing the kind of writing proper to song lyric.” No one quite knew what that was, but everyone knew what it was not.

I very much doubt that Wang Zhuo had read Li Zhiyi’s colophon, but it is quite clear that Wang Zhuo knew Li Qingzhao’s “Discourse on Song Lyric.” He begins his long entry on “The Strengths and

9. For a discussion and full translation of Li Qingzhao’s “Discourse on Song Lyric,” see Egan 2013, 75–90.

10. See Chapter 7, “Su Shi,” under “Su Shi and Liu Yong.”

Weaknesses of the Famous Lyricists" (各家詞短長) by defending the very lyricists that Li Qingzhao had attacked (except for Zeng Gong, who is impossible to defend as a lyricist).¹¹

王荊公長短句不多，合繩墨處，自雍容奇特。晏元獻公、歐陽文忠公，風流縉籍，一時莫及，而溫潤秀潔，亦無其比。東坡先生以文章餘事作詩，溢而作詞曲，高處出神入天，平處尚臨鏡笑春，不顧儕輩。或曰，長短句中詩也。為此論者，乃是遭柳永野狐涎之毒。詩與樂府同出，豈當分異。若從柳氏家法，正自不得不分異耳。

Wang Anshi did not compose many heterometric lyrics, but when he matches the correct pattern, he moves with relaxed ease and is quite remarkable. Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu had an easy-going panache that was unequaled in their day, and their smooth grace and outstanding purity were also without peer. Master Dongpo composed classical poems as the surplus of his efforts in letters, and this flooded over into song lyrics. At his best he goes back and forth between spirit and nature itself; even in his ordinary parts he is a beautiful woman smiling at herself in a mirror, heedless of her peers. Some have said that his is classical poetry in song lyric form. Those who argue this are in fact poisoned by the wild fox drool of Liu Yong.¹² Poetry and *yuefu* have a common origin—why should they be distinguished? But if one follows the “family method” of Liu Yong, one really cannot help distinguishing them.

What we see is a hardening of positions, perhaps in response to Li Qingzhao's assault on Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu. We should note Li Zhiyi's equivocal position: Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu have a grace, but this is not what they are good at. Wang Zhuo's defense of Su Shi is remarkable, as is blaming the split between classical poetry and song lyric on Liu Yong (and implicitly placing Li Qingzhao in Liu Yong's demonically enchanted camp).

This brings us to the transformation of Liu Yong during this interval. In comment and anecdote we clearly see a generally positive judg-

11. The sequence from Wang Anshi to Yan Shu, Ouyang Xiu, and Su Shi is hard to explain except as a response to Li Qingzhao's sharpest attack, moving back to her previous criticisms of famous lyricists.

12. The “wild fox drool” is based on a folk belief that if one buries a jar with meat in it, a fox will come and drool over the spot. The drool will seep into the meat. If one then digs up the jar and feeds the meat to someone, that person will become delusional. Jiang Ping, 59.

ment of Liu Yong at the beginning of the twelfth century, passing to a negative moral judgment on the content and style of his lyrics and finally, by the mid-twelfth century, a moral condemnation of the person.¹³ We see a similar process in our three versions of the history of song lyric.

First, Li Zhiyi:

至柳耆卿始鋪叙展衍，備足無餘，形容盛明，千載如逢當日。較之花間所集，韻終不勝，由是知其為難能也。

When we come to Liu Yong, for the first time the exposition develops fully, replete and without surplus, describing the splendor of the era, and for a thousand years it will be like being in those times. But in comparison to what is collected in the *Huajian ji*, he could not carry on their euphony. From this we can know how hard it is to be good at it.

Then Li Qingzhao:

又涵養百餘年，始有柳屯田永者，變舊聲作新聲，出樂章集，大得聲稱於世；雖協音律，而詞語塵下。

After more than a century of being steeped in and nurtured by it [the moral influence of the Song founding], there was first Liu Yong, who transformed the old music and created the new music, producing the *Yuezhang ji*, which received great acclaim at the time. Although he matched the rules of musicality, his diction is base.

By Wang Zhuo's time Liu Yong's lyrics were seen as demonic "wild fox drool." Wang Zhou goes no further in this entry, but follows this entry with an entry on "The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Famous Lyricists," which has a separate entry entirely devoted to denouncing Liu Yong.

What is striking is that beneath the loud disagreements, there is a shared set of questions and a shared canon. We might note, for example, that Song Qi appears as a central figure in the mid-eleventh century cluster in Li Zhiyi (as noted above, also cited as an important lyricist by

13. See Owen, "Liu Yong (?-?) and Dancing Renzong," on the Asia Center's website, <https://asiacenter.harvard.edu/publications/just-a-song-chinese-lyrics-from-the-eleventh-and-early-twelfth-centuries-5b16a2b4455de72a8254200c>.

Huang Tingjian) and reappears in Li Qingzhao's "Discourse on Song Lyric" as one of the figures "after" Liu Yong:

又有張子野、宋子京兄弟、沈唐、元絳、晁次膺輩繼出，雖時時有妙語，而破碎何足名家。

Also there were ilk of Zhang Xian, Song Qi and his brother (Song Xiang 宋庠), Shen Tang, Yuan Jiang, Chao Duanli, emerging in succession. Although they have fine phrases now and then, how can these broken bits and pieces deserve to be considered famous authors?

This is an odd mix of lyricists of Yan Shu's and Ouyang Xiu's generation with Chao Duanli, a lyricist of the generation born between the mid-1040s and mid-1050s. While Zhang Xian and Chao Duanli have extant collections, the rest have only a few works surviving (Song Xiang has none). And what does Li Qingzhao mean by *posui* 破碎 ("broken bits and pieces")? This may mean only the excellent passages she refers to (implying that they could not sustain a lyric). It might also mean scattered lyrics, but no oeuvre. This would, in turn, imply that she did not know of or have access to Zhang Xian's and Chao Duanli's fuller lyric collections.

After this passage follows Li Qingzhao's critique of Yan Shu, Ouyang Xiu, and Su Shi for writing classical poems in irregular lines, and her comment on the comically bad lyrics of Wang Anshi and Zeng Gong. Li Zhiyi had ended his colophon with Yan Shu and Ouyang Xiu, leaving his contemporaries unmentioned. Li Qingzhao, however, moves ahead with the generation born in the mid-1040s to mid-1050s.

後晏叔原、賀方回、秦少游、黃魯直出，始能知之。又晏苦無鋪敘。賀苦少重典。秦即專主情致，而少故實。譬如貧家美女，雖極妍麗豐逸，而終乏富貴態。黃即尚故實而多疵病，譬如良玉有瑕，價自減矣。

Afterward Yan Jidao, He Zhu, Qin Guan, and Huang Tingjian appeared, and for the first time there were those who could understand it. But Yan Jidao is terribly wanting in exposition, while He Zhu is terribly short on canonical *gravitas*. Qin Guan focuses exclusively on emotions and is short on references, just like a beautiful girl from a poor family—though she may be exceedingly gorgeous and easy-going, in the end she lacks the manner of a highborn lady. Huang Tingjian loves allusions, yet has many mistakes, just like a fine jade with flaws—its value is reduced.

Wang Zhuo covers the same lyricists and others, moving chronologically into the lyricists of Huizong's reign and the early Southern Song. We will defer to the next chapter Wang Zhuo's larger representation of song lyric in the first part of the twelfth century. Since, in some measure, Wang Zhuo is responding to Li Qingzhao's "Discourse on Song Lyric," we might note how he redirects each of the final four lyricists grouped together by Li Qingzhao for their understanding of the musicality of song lyric, even though each is fatally flawed. In commenting on Yan Jidao, after placing him among those who are unique authors (*zi cheng yijia* 自成一家), Wang Zhuo turns to Huang Tingjian's judgment:

叔原如金陵王謝子弟，秀氣勝韻，得之天然，將不可學。

Yan Jidao is like one of the lads of the Wangs and Xies, a superb aura and excellent resonance which he achieved by nature; he virtually cannot be imitated.

As for He Zhu, he offers a judgment combined with one on Zhou Bangyan:

賀、周語意精新，用心甚苦。

He's and Zhou's diction and concepts are honed and fresh, and they have spent intense effort on them.

Qin Guan is likewise redeemed:

張子野、秦少游俊逸精妙。少游屢困京洛，故疏蕩之風不除。

Zhang Xian and Qin Guan have a splendid insouciance and refined finesse. Qin Guan was often bogged down in the capital region, so he never got rid of his careless, wild manner.

Finally there is Huang Tingjian, treated by Li Qingzhao as one of those who first truly understood the difference of song lyric. Wang Zhuo considers this a misguided criterion of judgment. Instead he is grouped with Chao Buzhi as the disciple of Su Shi who achieved "70 to 80 percent" of the true master. To this Wang Zhuo adds: "In his

later years Huang let himself go at ease in the Entertainment Quarter, thus there are moments that have a rather careless, wild manner" (黃晚年開放於狹邪, 故有少疏蕩處).

If we look at all these differing judgments as a whole, in every case Wang takes a Li Qingzhao judgment based on the distinctive nature of song lyric as a genre, especially its musicality, and changes it to a judgment that could as easily be made about classical poetry. Most of his judgments are not directed to the handling of song lyric, but rather to the character of the lyricist, implying moral approval or disapproval.

We have been focusing on the evolving and contested judgments of eleventh-century lyricists, judgments that reinforce a canon even as they disagree. Comparing these three sets of judgments, however, may not be the important story. The growing background across this rough half century makes these differing judgments less a simple dispute among aficionados than a tracing of a history.

To return to the beginning of our chapter, the context is the changing scale and role given to the Tang and Five Dynasties as the ground for Song lyric. Li Zhiyi, writing when the influence of *Huajian ji* was beginning to make itself felt, tells a simple story. First, the Tang added "filler words" (*hesheng* 和聲) to make a poem singable; later authors wrote words for a particular tune. This is a simple, formal account of genre change, rather than one that is fully historically grounded.

Let me here add a word about our ignorance. Although we have many texts "about" Tang music, we really have no idea how the texts about Tang music related to the actual practice of Tang song in different places, and at different times and venues. Song writers knew no more than we do and perhaps less. They had oral and written material they took to be true. But there is nothing that even approaches reliable knowledge about Tang song practice and its relation to the texts of songs.

Like modern scholars, Song aficionados wanted reliable knowledge to tell a historical story, and they told such stories liberally. The particular stories they told are more interesting as representations of the tellers than of the Tang and Five Dynasties. But the desire for a historical story is, in its own right, the significant constant.

In conjunction with Wu Ke's interest in *Huajian ji*, Li Zhiyi gives a simple historical account of the origins of the genre, from the use of

"filler words" to reconcile isometric poems with heterometric melodies. He probably derived this claim from some of the lyrics of Huangfu Song 皇甫松 in the *Huajian ji* itself. Huangfu Song is the earliest author in *Huajian ji*, some of whose lyrics are quatrains to which added phrases like "Hey, boys" (*nianshao* 年少) appear in the odd lines, and in the even lines, there are phrases like "lift the oars" (*juzhao* 舉棹). Li Zhiyi sees this as evolving into actual heterometric lyrics. It was a reasonable theory given the available evidence.¹⁴

Li Qingzhao begins her "Discourse on Song Lyric" with a peculiar etiological anecdote, not of the origin of the form, but of its popularity.

樂府聲詩並著，最盛於唐。開元、天寶間，有李八郎者，能歌擅天下。時新及第進士開宴曲江，榜中一名士，先召李，使易服隱姓名，衣冠故敝，精神慘沮，與同之宴所。曰："表弟願與坐末。"眾皆不顧。既酒行樂作，歌者進，時曹元謙、念奴為冠，歌罷，眾皆咨嗟稱賞。名士忽指李曰："請表弟歌。"眾皆哂，或有怒者。及轉喉發聲，歌一曲，眾皆泣下。羅拜曰："此李八郎也。"自後鄭、衛之聲日熾，流靡之變日煩。已有《菩薩蠻》、《春光好》、《莎雞子》、《更漏子》、《浣溪沙》、《夢江南》、《漁父》等詞，不可遍舉。

The prominence of *yuefu* and sung poems (*shengshi* 聲詩) was at its height in the Tang. In the Kaiyuan and Tianbao reigns there was a certain Li Balang whose skill in singing was supreme in the whole world. Once, the newly passed *jinsshi* examinees held a banquet at Qujiang Park. A certain gentleman of renown summoned Li Balang ahead of time and had him change his clothes and conceal his name. Dressed in old, worn-out clothes and seeming to be in a miserable mood, Li Balang went along to where the banquet was being held. The gentleman said, "My maternal cousin wants to join and sit at the end of the table." No one in the group paid any attention to him. As the ale was passed around and the music began, the singers came forth. At the time Cao Yuanqian and Niannu were the best. When they finished their songs, everyone present sighed with admiration and praise. Then the gentleman suddenly pointed at Li Balang and said, "Let me request that my cousin sing." Everyone present sneered, and there were some who got angry. But when the sound came from his throat and he sang a song, everyone shed tears. Gathering around him, and bowing to him, they said, "This is Li Balang."

14. If he had known the *Zunqian ji*, such an argument would have been less likely.

From this point on the music of Zheng and Wei became increasingly popular, and fancy variations became increasingly numerous.¹⁵ Already there were lyrics to "Pusa man," "Spring Light Fine," "Fowl in the Sedge," "Genglouzi," "Washing Creek Sand," "Dreaming of the Southland," "Fisherman," and others—too many to name them all.

This is a very strange way to begin a "discourse on song lyric," especially one that celebrates the musicality of the genre.¹⁶ The triumph of the supreme singer is taken both as the beginning of the genre's popularity and as a bad cultural influence that lasts until the cultural reform of the Song dynasty. If Li Zhiyi upholds *Huajian ji* as the "revered ancestor," Li Qingzhao, in her narrative of decline, skips it entirely, citing instead two lines from the Southern Tang lyricists Li Jing 李璟 and Feng Yansi as "the tones of a ruined state" (*wangguo zhi yin* 亡國之音), a phrase from the "Great Preface" to the *Classic of Poetry*.

If Li Zhiyi believed that writing heterometric song lyric began in the Late Tang, Li Qingzhao names lyrics that she thought were already popular in the eighth century. Some, but not all, of the tune names she gives are included in the Tang *Jiaofang ji* 教坊記. She does not question the relation between the tunes and song practice, nor does she consider the stability of tunes over a span of three and a half centuries. But she clearly knows more and cares more about the possible "origins" of song lyric than Li Zhiyi.

Wang Zhuo's *Biji manzhi* shows an even greater interest in Tang dynasty song lyric. The book has several versions, but the five-fascicle version devotes the entire first fascicle to Tang song lyric. Wang Zhuo's comments on Song dynasty lyric constitute the second fascicle. The last three fascicles are devoted to melodies, usually tracing their origins to the Tang.

The rough half-century that separates Li Zhiyi from Wang Zhuo saw an immense growth of interest in song lyric and its history. In 1148 we

15. The "music of Zheng and Wei" suggests decadence and bad moral influence.

16. Cao Yuanqian and Niannu were women singers. As mentioned earlier, Wang Zhuo turned the anecdote around, with the talented male singer snubbed because of the preference for a beautiful young woman as the singer of song. See "The Singers" in Chapter 1, "Early Circulation."

have the first series of Hu Zi's *Tiaoxi yuyin conghua* extensively citing "remarks on song lyric," almost all of which were from the preceding half-century. Hu Zi begins his chapter on song lyric citing comments on Five Dynasties authors, especially Li Yu. The same year we have the Shaoxing edition of *Huajian ji*. A few years later, in 1151, we have Wang Anshi's lyrics included in his collected works and a printed edition of Su Shi's lyrics. A literary practice tied to changing fashions had now become a practice with a history, with the ever-increasing accessibility of a contemporary lyricist's access to that history.

FOURTEEN

The Last Generation of the Northern Song and On

The record gets remarkably thicker for lyricists of the generation born in the 1070s and 1080s, many of whom lived through the loss of the North to the Jin and the transfer of the dynasty to the South. If the generation of the mid-1040s to mid-1050s grew up with Liu Yong as the standard for *manci*, this younger generation grew up with Su Shi as the major literary figure, his works proscribed but known to all. Praised, dispraised, or ignored, Su Shi's presence was never absent.

This was a cultural moment not unlike the second half of the Eastern Han, when we see a sudden remarkable increase in preserved texts. Those Eastern Han authors may not have originally written things down on paper, but they lived close enough in time to the gradual proliferation of paper that their works had an immense survival advantage. In the same way, in the late Northern Song, manuscript circulation still predominated, especially in song lyric. A developed and mature print culture was nascent and would be fully realized from the mid-twelfth century on. We have striking losses, but we begin to be overwhelmed by the sheer quantity of surviving texts. One important factor in the volume of extant lyrics is that by the mid-twelfth century, lyric collections were being compiled and published by filial sons, grandsons, and descendants, so that extant collections are a less reliable guide to contemporary and subsequent judgment than manuscript traditions, recopied for personal interest.

We thus have a highly imperfect preservation of those lyricists who seem to have defined the temper of the age. Such distortions of preservation were usually because the witty, erotic, and evidently sometimes satirical temper of the early twelfth century displeased the more puritanical temper of the mid-twelfth century, with its anthologies, its critical comments, and its crucial role in the preservation of the work of earlier generations.

The consequence is a century-long gap, overabundantly filled with lyrics that nobody wants to read. In the century between the generation born in the late 1040s and early 1050s and the first generation of famous Southern Song lyricists—Xin Qiji (1140–1207) and Jiang Kui 姜夔 (ca. 1155–ca. 1221)—there is only one name that has survived at the top of the canon. This is Li Qingzhao (1084–ca. 1155). And in the case of Li Qingzhao, we have a partial and skewed survival. But in her case, even if we do not have disapproved lyrics that may have represented the “temper of the age,” her genius was such that it sustained intense interest in her more decorous lyrics. The same was not true of figures like Moqi Yong and Cao Zu.

If we view Li Qingzhao as the sole, truly outstanding lyricist of this half century, the critics of the mid-twelfth century saw a much larger picture, and it is a picture that is not well represented by the lyric collections surviving from the period.

In his preface to *Yuefu yaci*, Zeng Zao explicitly disclaims that his selection represents his own judgment; rather, these were the works he had in his library. In an entry titled “The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Famous Lyricists” in *Biji manzhi*, Wang Zhuo gives a full account of the lyric tradition as he saw it, an account that is particularly detailed regarding lyricists popular in his youth. This was twenty to thirty years before Wang’s discussions and notes of 1145, which were written up in 1149. We have a significant corpus of scattered comments in other “remarks on lyric” from the mid-twelfth century, but there is nothing else like Wang Zhuo’s overview of the world of lyric in the early decades of the twelfth century. It may not have been a general consensus, but it represents the understanding of one community.

In the first part of this chapter we will look carefully at Wang Zhuo’s account, rather than judging the period by the extant collections. As

suggested above, we find that his account of song lyric in the early twelfth century focuses on lyricists whose works are often not well preserved. That in itself may be a good indication that Wang Zhuo's thinking about the period was, in some aspects, reflective of the more widespread judgment of his time, in that Wang Zhuo often strongly disapproved of many of these lyricists. General disapproval of the same lyricists would, in some measure, account for their loss.

Wang Zhuo represents a new kind of "aficionado," one with a sense of the genre that went beyond "song lyric proper," but he had an understated contempt for those whose general reputation as literary figures sustained their reputation as lyricists; that is, those whose best qualities were, in Wang's words, "the same as in their classical poems." Wang Zhuo thought that Su Shi was the greatest of all earlier lyricists. Ye Mengde was clearly an important literary presence from the late Northern Song into the beginning of the Southern Song. In his anthology Zeng Zao had a gathering of Ye Mengde's lyrics larger than any other collection but Ouyang Xiu's. Writing at about the same time as Zeng Zao, Wang Zhuo observed: "Chao Buzhi and Huang Tingjian both imitated Su Shi and got about 70 to 80 percent of the resonance of his compositions. . . . Of those who imitated Su Shi later, Ye Mengde and Pu Ying got about 60 to 70 percent. Comparing the force of their talent to Chao and Huang, [we see that] they were inferior."¹ Although the idea of steady decline after a great master was a conventional mode of judgment, it is hard for the modern reader to disagree.²

Wang Zhuo's "The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Famous Lyricists" is a narrative of decline—eventually of moral decline—ending with a note of hope in an imperial edict to destroy the printing blocks of the worst offender Cao Zu, who passed a palace examination in 1120, a few years before the fall of the North. In this entry Liu Yong appears only as "wild fox drool," but, as noted earlier, Wang Zhuo vents his ire against Liu in the first of a series of entries on particular lyricists and books following the larger overview entry. Li Qingzhao is also omitted in

1. Wang and Yue, 34.

2. Jiang Zhelun opens his introduction to his recent annotated edition of Ye Mengde by saying that Ye "can't be counted as a major writer" (算不上大家). Jiang Zhelun, *Shilin ci jianzhu*, Introduction, 1.

the overview, but is given a separate entry, mixing the highest praise for her works with severe condemnation of her moral character as revealed in the lyrics.

The texts of song lyrics were still primarily in manuscript, and the knowledge of the aficionado was restricted to what he could acquire. It will be quite clear that Wang Zhuo's knowledge was far broader than that of anyone we have previously discussed. In his preface Wang Zhuo tells of ongoing discussions on song lyric with two friends when he was residing in Emerald Cock Ward in Chengdu, but perhaps more important was his friendship with Huang Dayu, who had compiled the *Plum Garden (Meiyuan)*, an 1129 anthology of lyrics on plums. Although lyrics on plum blossoms can become numbing when read in the hundreds, the range of Huang Dayu's sources is clear. He seems to have amassed a remarkable library of song lyric. As suggested earlier, much of this library seems to have been manuscripts of individual lyrics and sets, but his sources must surely have included collections (perhaps small ones like Zeng Zao's) of particular lyricists. Wang Zhuo would surely have had access to it. And when Wang Zhuo refers to Sichuan lyricists who now survive only through *Meiyuan*, it tends to confirm our suspicion that Wang Zhuo's remarkable erudition is the consequence of access to a remarkable, but local, library.

Here I will pick up the entry continuing Wang Zhuo's passage on Ye Mengde and Pu Ying mentioned above; he continues with the followers of Su Shi, sinking ever farther below the master:

蘇在庭、石耆翁入東坡之門矣，短氣蹢步，不能進也。趙德麟、李方叔皆東坡客，其氣味殊不近，趙婉而李俊，各有所長，晚年皆荒醉汝穎京洛間，時時出滑稽語。賀方回、周美成、晏叔原、僧仲殊各盡其才力，自成一家。賀、周語意精新，用心甚苦。毛泽民、黃載萬次之。叔原如金陵王謝子弟，秀氣勝韻，得之天然，將不可學。仲殊次之，殊之膽，晏反不逮也。張子野、秦少游俊逸精妙。少游屢困京洛，故疏蕩之風不除。陳無己所作數十首，號曰語業，妙處如其詩，但用意太深，有時僻澀。陳去非、徐師川、蘇養直、呂居仁、韓子蒼、朱希真、陳子高、洪覺范佳處亦各如其詩。王輔道、履道善作一種俊語，其失在輕浮。輔道夸捷敏，故或有不鎮密。李漢老富麗而韻平平。舒信道、李元膺，思致妍密，要是波瀾小。謝無逸字字求工，不敢輒下一語，如刻削通草人，都無筋骨，要是力不足。然則獨無逸乎。曰，類多有之，此最著者爾。宗室

中，明發、伯山久從汝洛名士游，下筆有逸韻，雖未能一一盡奇，比國賢、聖褒則過之。王逐客才豪，其新麗處與輕狂處，皆足驚人。沈公述、李景元、孔方平、處度叔侄、晁次膺、萬俟雅言，皆有佳句，就中雅言又絕出。然六人者，源流從柳氏來，病於無韻。雅言初自集分兩體，曰雅詞，曰側艷，目之曰勝萱麗藻。後召試入官，以側艷體無賴太甚，削去之。再編成集，分五體，曰應制、曰風月脂粉、曰雪月風花、曰脂粉才情、曰雜類，周美成目之曰大聲。次膺亦閑作側艷。田不伐才思與雅言抗行，不聞有側艷。田中行極能寫人意中事，雜以鄙俚，曲盡要妙，當在萬俟雅言之右。然莊語輒不佳。嘗執一扇，書句其上云“玉蝴蝶戀花心動”語人曰“此聯三曲名也，有能對者，吾下拜”。北里狹邪間橫行者也。宗室溫之次之。長短句中，作滑稽無賴語，起於至和。嘉祐之前，猶未盛也。熙豐、元祐間，兗州張山人以詼諧獨步京師，時出一兩解。澤州孔三傳者，首創諸宮調古傳，士大夫皆能誦之。元祐間，王齊叟彥齡，政和間，曹組元寵，皆能文，每出長短句，膾炙人口。彥齡以滑稽語河朔。組潦倒無成，作紅窗迥及雜曲數百解，聞者絕倒，滑稽無賴之魁也。賁緣遭遇，官至防禦使。同時有張袞臣者，組之流，亦供奉禁中，號曲子張觀察。其後祖述者益眾，嫚戲汙賤，古所未有。組之子，知閤門事勛，字公顯，亦能文。嘗以家集刻板，欲蓋父之惡。近有旨下揚州，毀其板云。

Su Zaiting and Shi Qiwen were partially successful followers of Dongpo, but being short on energy and having a cramped gait, they could not advance. Zhao Lingzhi and Li Qing (李慶, 1059–1109) were both protégés of Dongpo, but the flavor of their work was not at all close to Su's; Zhao was tender and Li was cavalier—each had his strongpoints, but in their later years they went wild in drunkenness in Ru-Ying and the capital region, and often used the witty language of a jester.

He Zhu, Zhou Bangyan, Yan Jidao, and the monk Zhongshu all exerted their talents to the utmost, and each became a distinctive writer in his own right. He's and Zhou's diction and concepts are honed and fresh, and they spent intense effort on them. Mao Pang (毛滂, 1060–ca. 1124) and Huang Dayu (黃大輿, ca. 1095–ca. 1160) are second to them. Yan Jidao is like one of the lads of the Wangs and Xies, with a superb aura and excellent resonance, which he achieved by nature; he virtually cannot be imitated. Zhongshu is second to him, but Yan Jidao is not up to the richness of his work. Zhang Xian and Qin Guan have a splendid insouciance and refined finesse. Qin Guan was often bogged down in the capital region, so he never got rid of his careless, wild manner. The twenty or thirty pieces by Chen Shidao he called his “Karma of Words”; their fine points are like his classical poems, but his concepts are too deep and sometimes obscure.

The outstanding aspects of Chen Yuyi (陳與義 1090–1139), Xu Fu (徐俯 1075–1141), Su Xiang (蘇庠 1065–1147), Lü Benzhong (1084–1145), Han Ju (韓駒 1080–1135), Zhu Dunru (朱敦儒 1081–1159), Chen Ke (陳克 1081–1137), and Huihong (惠洪 1071–1128) are all [the same] as in their classical poems. Wang Cai (王鞏 1078–1118) and Wang Anzhong (王安中 1075–1134) are good at a certain kind of fine diction, but their failing lies in their frivolity. Wang Cai shows off his insouciance, so at times there is a certain carelessness. Li Bing 李邴 (1085–1146) has a gorgeousness but a flatness in terms of resonance. Shu Dan and Li Yuanying have a beautiful density in thinking, but little modulation. Xie Wuyi sought mastery in every single word, and never dared a single phrase casually, like a figure carved out of the tetrapanax plant [which is empty inside], entirely without any sense of sturdy structure—this is mainly due to his lack of adequate force. But then is he the only such person? No, there were many like him. He is just the most prominent. As for the imperial house, Zhao Shijian (趙士暉) and Zhao Zisong (趙子崧) long spent their time roaming about with prominent gentlemen in Ru and Luoyang; when they set brush to paper there was a tone of being above it all; even though they couldn't be remarkable in each little thing, they surpassed Zhao Guoxian and Zhao Shengbao.

Wang Zhongfu (王仲甫) had a bold talent, whose moments of fresh beauty and moments of light wildness all were enough to amaze people.³ Shen Tang (沈唐), Li Jia (李甲), Kong Yi (孔夷) and Kong Ju (孔槩), uncle and nephew, Chao Duanli, and Moqi Yong all have lovely lines and among them Moqi Yong stands out. Nevertheless, all six trace their origins from Liu Yong and are harmed by a lack of resonance. Moqi Yong made his own collection divided into two distinct forms: “lyrics in the high style” (*yaci*) and “the voluptuous” (*ceyan* 側豔).⁴ Moqi Yong considered them

3. There is some confusion about who Wang Zhongfu was. Ye Can 葉燾 and Wang Zhaopeng 王兆鵬 refute the old identification with Wang Guan 王觀 in “Bei Song ciren Wang Zhongfu, Wang Guan shiji kaobian” 北宋詞人王仲甫, 王觀事難考辨 (<http://www.literature.org.cn/Article.aspx?id=55309>). But their Wang Zhongfu belongs to an earlier generation than the other lyricists in this section; I suspect this is another Wang Zhongfu.

4. For want of an English term that catches the tone of *ce* 側, I have left it untranslated. Its sense in this context is “not proper” (*buzheng* 不正), but “improper” is too extreme. I am tempted by the term “naughty,” which catches something of the challenge to moral propriety, but has a lightness that avoids the “improper.” As is obvious in what follows, to some eyes it was indeed “improper.” “Bawdy” might be a good translation for *ceyan*, but “bawdy” can be too overtly sexual.

as "the gorgeous ornament superior to the herb of oblivion."⁵ Later he was summoned to an examination by the emperor and started his official career; he deemed the form of "the voluptuous" too irresponsible in the extreme and excised those works. Again he edited his works into a collection divided into five forms: 1) responding to imperial command; 2) rouge and powder in breeze and moonlight; 3) breeze and flowers, snow and moonlight; 4) the passions of rouge and powder; and 5) miscellaneous. Zhou Bangyan considered them the "Master Music."⁶ Chao Duanli also wrote in "the voluptuous" mode in his idle moments. Tian Wei's (田為) talents made a fitting pair with Moqi Yong, but one does not hear of him writing "the voluptuous." Tian Zhonghang was extremely skilled in describing what was going on in a person's mind, mixed with the vernacular, and minutely describing the subtleties; he should be placed next to Moqi Yong. Nevertheless when he writes serious diction, it is no good. He once picked up a fan and wrote a line on it: "Jade butterflies loving flowers hearts stirred." He then said to someone, "This links together three tune titles; if anyone can match it with a parallel line, I'll kowtow to him." He was someone who behaved profligately in the side lanes of the Entertainment Quarter. Zhao Wenzhi of the imperial house was second to him in this.

In heterometric song lyrics, writing with witty and risqué language first appeared in the Zhihe reign (1054–56). Before the end of the Jiayou reign (1056–63) this was still not popular. In the Xining and Yuanfeng reigns (1068–85) and in the Yuanyou reign (1086–94), mountain man Zhang of Yuezhou was a singular sensation in the capital for his witty verses, offering one or two stanzas on occasion. Kong Sanchuan of Zezhou was the first to create accounts of ancient matters in "All the Modes," and gentlemen could all recite them.⁷ In the Yuanyou reign there was Wang Qisou, style name Yanling; in the Zhenghe reign (1111–18) there was Cao Zu, style name Yuanzhong; both were skilled at composition, and whenever they came up with a heterometric lyric, it was on everyone's tongue. Wang Yanling used witticisms to talk about the northern borderlands. Cao Zu was feckless and accomplished nothing; he composed "Red Windows Remote" and several hundred stanzas of song; those who heard them were knocked over, and he was the chief

5. This was the title of Moqi Yong's first collection of lyrics. The "herb of oblivion" is the *xuan* 萱, the herb that makes one forget one's cares.

6. The title supposedly given by Zhou Bangyan to Moqi Yong's reedited collection of lyrics.

7. This is one of the earliest references to a popular narrative form in which prose narrative was combined with songs in various tunes.

of witty good-for-nothings. Through his connections he reached high office, attaining the position of defense commissioner. At the same time there was one Zhang Gunchen, one of Cao Zu's sort, and he too served in the palace. They called him "Lyric Surveillance Commissioner Zhang." Afterwards those who imitated him became increasingly numerous; such intimate jokes and filth had never been seen before. Cao Zu's son, Cao Xun (1098–1174), style name Gongxian, in charge of audience ceremony, was also good at literature. Wanting to cover over his father's misdeeds, he had blocks for his father's literary collection cut. Recently an edict was sent to Yangzhou, ordering the blocks destroyed.

Even for a scholar familiar with song lyric (except for a specialist in this understudied period), this is a numbing list of names. The earlier lyricists are famous; the later lyricists are less well known or virtually unknown. One of the problems is that many of the figures Wang Zhuo considered worth mentioning either do not survive at all or survive only in a few lyrics, lyrics that rarely match the qualities that Wang Zhuo ascribes to the lyricist in question. Either Wang Zhuo is unreliable, or he so perfectly represents the temper of his own times that those he condemned were quietly dropped in the line of transmission.

We cannot treat all these lyricists who were singled out for praise or blame by Wang Zhuo. We can, however, easily divide them into categories. In the first paragraph Wang Zhuo finishes the lineage of Su Shi, as a story of increasing distance from the Master, including those protégés whose style was different from Su's, and concluding with degeneration into wit.⁸

The second paragraph contains Zhang Xian and many of the most important lyricists of the generation born in the mid-eleventh century. These lyricists can neither be filiated to Su Shi, nor does Wang Zhuo want them to have any association with Liu Yong. Zhou Bangyan's rise to prominence is clear here.

The third paragraph contains a very long list of later lyricists (that is, born in the late eleventh century) whose lyrics are "like their classical poems." This paragraph is a grab-bag, with a special attention to denouncing the fastidious stylist who looks back to *Huajian ji*, Xie Wuyi.

8. Note that the paragraph divisions are added in the translation for convenience and are not present in the original.

In the next paragraph Wang Zhuo concludes his taxonomy with those he sees as representing the legacy of Liu Yong, Moqi Yong, first prominent in the Yuanyou reign and later serving in Huizong's Music Academy (Dasheng Fu), announces the decline into decadence, leading to the fifth paragraph that carries us first over into popular literature, rising back to the elite in Cao Zu, embodying the utter decadence of Huizong's court, with the imminent loss of the North looming in the background. It is not really a "history," since the chronology is mixed up, but the taxonomy is organized to create the illusion of a history.

We cannot here treat all of these figures, but we might consider a few, including many who are now virtually unread. We will begin with one who is read, but is dropped in a long list without any particular qualities describing him.

The Classical Poets: Zhu Dunru

Zhu Dunru is one of those poets whose lyrics are "like" his classical poems. The irony here is that Zhu Dunru's classical poems have been almost entirely lost (they seem to have never been either numerous or well known).⁹ Wang Zhuo's judgment that Zhu's lyrics share the virtues of his classical poetry may simply mean that his lyrics did indeed sound like classical poetry. We are focusing on the Northern Song, and it was observed already in the Song that his fame in lyric appeared only in the Southern Song. We include him here because he had a certain fame as one of the representatives of song lyric in the transition from Northern to Southern Song. In the May Fourth era he was even made a champion of the "vernacular" (*baihua* 白話) in song lyric.¹⁰ There were indeed at the time truly vernacular lyricists, and Zhu Dunru was not among them. Those other lyricists did not, however, represent the "vernacular" that May Fourth critics wanted.

For the lover of "song lyric proper" Zhu Dunru is remarkably flat. There is a poetic strangeness to Su Shi that makes his plain diction into

9. For the extant classical poems, see QSS vol. 25, 16879.

10. Rao Zongyi 1963, 120.

something very different from classical poetry in song lyric form. Zhu Dunru, however, may deserve the characterization that he is writing classical poems in lyric form, particularly in his *manci*. He is at his best in his short songs, which indeed sound like songs. The following lyric to "Partridge Sky" is a familiar pattern, alternating "then" and "now" in the two stanzas. But it has a memorable fluency.¹¹

曾為梅花醉不歸。佳人挽袖乞新詞。
輕紅遍寫鴛鴦帶，濃碧爭斟翡翠卮。
人已老，事皆非。花前不飲淚沾衣。
如今但欲關門睡，一任梅花作雪飛。

Once for the sake of plum blossoms
I got drunk and didn't go home.
The fair woman pulled at my sleeves,
begging for new lyrics.
In light red I wrote all over
her mandarin duck sash,
pouring as much as I could into dark green
of jadeite flagons.
This man has grown old,
everything is different.
I won't drink before the flowers,
tears soak my clothes.
Nowadays I just want to lock the door and sleep,
and let the plum blossoms be as falling snow.

The Aesthete: Xie Yi

Li Zhiyi's friend Wu Ke had devoted himself entirely to the style of *Huajian ji* as a model of stylistic perfection. None of his lyrics survive. But, as Wang Zhuo noted, the *Huajian ji* represented a type of style; and in Wang Zhuo's eyes its most prominent practitioner was the fastidious Xie Yi 謝逸, probably born around 1068 and passing away in 1112 or 1113. Having failed the examination, he led a private life. He died relatively

11. Tang Guizhang 1999, 1091; Deng Zimian 1998, 140.

young in his mid-forties, which places his work securely in the decades around the turn of the twelfth century.

Xie Yi's work is not only confined to *xiaoling*, but largely to *xiaoling* in the *Huajian ji* style, and particularly to Wen Tingyun. What had been, in Wen Tingyun, the evocative scene that was fashionable in the Entertainment Quarter of his day becomes, in Xie Yi, a choice of restriction, trying to return to that style and do it more perfectly. Other lyricists tried it occasionally, but this was Xie Yi's sole sphere. When he has to do an occasional lyric, he steps out of his song lyric world only a very short distance and with discomfort.

To "Yu meiren" 虞美人¹²

角聲吹散梅梢雪。疏影黃昏月。落英點點拂闌干。
風送清香滿院、作輕寒。
花瓷羯鼓催行酒。紅袖揜揜手。曲聲未徹寶杯空。
飲罷香薰翠被、錦屏中。

The sound of a horn blows apart
the snow on the plum branch-tips.
Sparse shadows in the twilight moon.
Speck by speck the fallen blooms
brush the railing.
The breeze brings their pure fragrance to the yard,
making a light cold.
Flowered porcelain and the Jie drum
hurry the ale passing around.
In the red sleeve a delicate hand.
Before the melody is done
the precious cup is empty.
Drinking finished, fragrance permeates the blue-green quilt
within the brocade screen.

To "Ta suo xing"¹³

柳絮風輕，梨花雨細。春陰院落簾垂地。
碧溪影裏小橋橫，青簾市上孤煙起。

12. Tang Guizhang 1999, 832.

13. Tang Guizhang 1999, 829.

鏡約關情，琴心破睡。輕寒漠漠侵鴛被。
酒醒霞散臉邊紅，夢回山蹙眉間翠。

The breeze is gentle on the willow floss,
the rain fine on the pear blossoms.
A garden in springtime shade, curtains hang to the ground.
Reflections in the sapphire creek,
a small bridge stretches across,
over the market with green curtains,
a lone column of smoke rises.

The mirror pact is on her mind,¹⁴
the heart conveyed in the zither wakes her from sleep.
Light cold spreads far and wide,
getting into the mandarin duck coverlet.
Ale wears away, rosy clouds disperse
their pink in the cheeks,
returning from dreams, hills crinkle
their blue-green in her brows.

In both lyrics a stanza "outside" is followed by a stanza "inside," with the relationship between the two left open. In the "Ta suo xing" the waking from dream in the second stanza leaves it uncertain whether the first stanza might be what she saw in her dream.

The Court Favorite and "Sage of Song Lyric": Moqi Yong

Moqi Yong seems to have become known in the Yuanyou reign, but having failed the examination, he gave himself over to the wild life, styling himself the "Lyric Hermit" (*ciyin* 詞隱). During Huizong's reign he was called to court and given office, one of the few lyricists whose works now survive from the Dasheng Fu. Zhou Bangyan was supposed to have composed a preface for his collection of lyrics. The anthologist Huang Sheng 黃升 referred to him as the "sage of lyric" (*cisheng* 詞聖), and cited

14. A pact made between husband and wife when they faced separation.

Huang Tingjian as calling him "the lyricist of a whole generation" (*yidai ciren* 一代詞人). For all Moqi Yong's apparent fame in his own day, only twenty-seven or twenty-nine lyrics survive of a large collection that was once in five fascicles.

It is difficult to discover the Moqi Yong described by Wang Zhuo in the extant lyrics—or, more properly, we discover only a small part of Wang Zhuo's Moqi Yong in the extant lyrics. This is a problem with all lyricists whose collections do not survive independently. If such lyricists have a disproportionate number of lyrics on flowers, plants, trees, and holidays, the reason is quite simply the sources: Huang Dayu's *Meiyuan* provides so many lyrics on plum blossoms that it seems to have been an obsession of Northern Song lyric in general, rather than Huang Dayu's personal obsession as an anthologist. There were, indeed, many poems on seasons and holidays, but Chen Yuanjing's 陳元靚 thirteenth-century *Broad Record of the Seasons of the Year* (*Suishi guangji* 歲時廣記) is a major source for recovering song lyrics. Likewise, lyricists do often write about flowers, but not with the frequency we see in those lyricists whose collections have not been transmitted. The Southern Song *Comprehensive Ancestor of All Flowers* (*Qunfang beizu* 羣芳備祖) is an even more important source for otherwise lost song lyrics. The reverse problem is far more serious and distorting: in the increasingly puritanical culture of the Southern Song, the more risqué lyrics, "the voluptuous," had a very low chance at survival. Moqi Yong was fortunate to have twelve lyrics preserved in Huang Sheng's *Tang Song zhuxian juemiao cixuan*, not necessarily on flowers and festivals, but also including no risqué lyrics.

We might dearly wish to see those "voluptuous" lyrics that so shocked, or the lyrics that made him the "sage of lyric" (the counterpart of none other than Du Fu, the "sage of classical poetry"). Instead I must try the patience of my readers by taking a brief look at imperial song, lyrics written to imperial command, whether by virtue of his office in the Dasheng Fu or otherwise. The tune is "Santai," 三臺 with the note "The Clear and Bright Festival: to imperial command" 清明應制.¹⁵

15. Tang Guizhang 1999, 1047.

見梨花初帶夜月，海棠半含朝雨。

內苑春、不禁過青門，御溝漲、潛通南浦。東風靜、細柳垂金縷。
望鳳闕、非烟非霧。好時代、朝野多歡，遍九陌、太平簫鼓。

乍鶯兒百轉斷續，燕子飛來飛去。

近綠水、臺榭映秋千，鬥草聚、雙雙游女。錫香更、酒冷踏青路。
會暗識、天桃朱戶。向晚驟、寶馬雕鞍，醉襟惹、亂花飛絮。

正輕寒輕暖漏永，半陰半晴雲暮。

禁火天、已是試新妝，歲華到、三分佳處。清明看、漢宮傳蠟炬。
散翠烟、飛入槐府。斂兵衛、閭闔門開，住傳宣、又還休務。

We see the pear blossoms first catching the moonlight,
the crabapple half covered with dawn drizzle.

Spring in the palace park

is not forbidden from passing Green Gate,¹⁶

where the imperial moat floods over,

connecting unseen to South Shore.

The breeze from the east settles down,

and slender willows dangle their golden threads.

Gazing to the Phoenix Turrets,¹⁷

it is not a mist and not a fog.¹⁸

A good age,

many the pleasures of court and commons.

Everywhere on the Nine Paths

the pipes and drums of an era of peace.

First the orioles with a hundred warblings on and off,
the swallows coming and going in flight.

Drawing near green waters,

terraces and kiosks half hiding the swings,

gathering in a contest to find plants,

girls go roaming pair by pair.

The scent of sprout-sugar alters

the ale's cold on roads for strolling the meadows.¹⁹

We will soon vaguely recognize

tender peach trees and vermillion doors.

16. The eastern gate of the capital.

17. The entrance to the palace compound.

18. Auspicious vapors.

19. "Strolling the meadows" was the name for excursions after the Clear and Bright Festival, also called "Strolling the Meadows Festival."

Towards late afternoon will gallop
 jeweled horses and carved saddles,
 drunken gown-folds teased
 by tangles of flowers and flying willow floss.
 Now in light chill and light warmth the water-clock keeps on,
 half in shadow, half in light clouds turn twilight.
 The weather when fire is forbidden²⁰
 is already time for trying on new make-up.
 The splendor of the year has reached
 that fine point of its third part.²¹
 On Clear and Bright Festival we watch
 waxen torches transmitted from the palace of Han.²²
 Scattering blue-green smoke,
 they fly into the pagoda tree precincts.²³
 Gathering the imperial guard,
 the palace gates open,
 Ceasing to pass on orders,
 once again they go off duty.

Moqi Yong celebrates one of Huizong's outings on the Clear and Bright Festival, from dawn to night in an orderly exposition touching on all the necessary topics. The lyric is finely wrought, professional, and utterly impersonal.

In addition to the long, stylish *manci*, some *xiaoling* in an easy manner survive, like the following lyric to "Zhaojun yuan" 昭君怨.²⁴

春到南樓雪盡。驚動燈期花信。小雨一番寒。倚闌干。
 莫把闌干倚。一望幾重烟水。何處是京華。暮雲遮。

20. Cold Food Festival, when fire is forbidden, is a few days before the Clear and Bright Festival in the third lunar month.

21. That is, the third of the three lunar months of spring.

22. After the end of the prohibition against using fire, torches were sent from the palace to officials. This was made famous by a quatrain by the late eighth-century poet Han Hong 韓翃, whose final couplet went: "At sunset in the palace of Han they transmit the waxen torches, / the light smoke scatters into the homes of the Five Counts" (日暮漢宮傳蠟燭, 輕煙散入五侯家). QTs 12817.

23. The "pagoda tree precincts" are the residences of the leading court officials.

24. Tang Guizhang 1999, 1049.

Spring reaches the southern mansion, the snow is gone.
 It startles up the Lantern Festival and the news of flowers.
 A small rain, a spell of cold.
 I lean at the railing.
 Don't take hold of the railing and lean.
 One gaze on so many layers of misty waters.
 Where is the capital?
 Evening clouds cover it.

It is a striking enigma: this was a prolific lyricist whose work was praised by contemporaries but sometimes shocked them. The terms of praise—"the lyricist of a generation," the "sage of song lyric"—indicate a stature that is impossible to rediscover in the extant texts. Even in disapproval, Wang Zhuo grants him considerable textual space. Yet that lyricist, in all his apparent variety, is gone from the extant record—except for those rather bland lyrics that somehow survive.

Song Lyric's Bad Boy (on His Best Behavior): Cao Zu

The temper of the mid-twelfth century was quick to express shock and moral indignation. I strongly suspect that we would find the offending irreverence mild indeed, but we can also see the depth of Wang Zhuo's reaction to Cao Zu, a six-time examination failure made the equivalent of a *jinshi* graduate by Huizong's favor in 1121. Unfortunately we cannot test Wang Zhuo's judgment because by far the largest part of Cao Zu's extant lyrics are the thirty-one lyrics included by Zeng Zao in *Yuefu yaci*, with the explicit exclusion of the very kind of works that gave offense to Wang Zhuo.

If *Yuefu yaci* excludes "rascally wit," Zeng Zao does seem to have occasionally slipped, leaving us with a hint of what is missing, as in the following lyric to "Zui huayin" 醉花陰, on the Lantern Festival:²⁵

25. Tang Guizhang 1999, 1041. Looking, no doubt, for what I was looking for, Zhuge Yibing noticed the same text.

九陌寒輕春尚早。燈火都門道。月下步蓮人，薄薄香羅，
峭窄春衫小。
梅妝淺淡風蛾裏。隨路聽嬉笑。無限面皮兒，雖則不同，
各是一般好。

Light cold on the Nine Avenues, still early in spring.
Lanterns on the capital's streets.
Under the moon those whose steps are lotuses,
ever so thin, their scented gossamer,
closely fitting, their spring vests are small.
Plum beauty-marks lightly applied, brows brushed by the breeze.
All along the street I listen to merry laughter.
A boundless number of faces,
and though they are not the same,
each one is equally fine.

I suspect that this one made it past Zeng Zao's internal censor because the last line can be read innocently as "all are beautiful." And perhaps that is indeed the correct interpretation of the tone of the closing line. But the convention of looking for a partner in bed on the night of the Lantern Festival and Cao Zu's closing shift to very vernacular usage invite a more cynically witty reading that he does care whom he gets together with—with the possible translation "any one of them will do." Zhou Bangyan's lyric on the Lantern Festival given earlier is clearly a "lyric in the high style" (*yaci*); we might entertain the possibility that this could be "the voluptuous" (*ceyan*), the witty, irreverent lyric.

If we cannot fully see in Zeng Zao's selections the face of Cao Zu that Wang Zhuo saw, we *can* see negatively some of the forces that invited Cao Zu's irreverence. Lyrics were becoming routine and all too predictable—the reader wonders: "Haven't I read that somewhere before?" For example, Cao Zu has a charming lyric to "Yujia ao":²⁶

水上落紅時片片。江頭雪絮飛繚亂。渺渺碧波天漾遠。
平沙暖。花風一陣蘋香滿。
晚來醉著無人喚。殘陽已在青山半。睡覺只疑花改岸。
擡頭看。元來弱纜風吹斷。

26. Tang Guizhang 1999, 1040.

Falling red on the water, now and then petal by petal.
Snowlike floss at the riverside flies in a tangle.
Sapphire waves faint and far, rolling off to the horizon.
The sand-flats are warm.
A gust of flowers in the breeze, filled with the scent of duckweed.
As the day grows late I get drunk, no one calls me awake.
Then the fading sunlight is already half behind the green hills.
When I wake up, I wonder if the flowers have changed their shore.
I raise my head and look.
It was because the weak moorings had been broken by the breeze.

The first stanza is virtually anonymous. The second stanza has a charm in seeing the poet falling asleep drunk, then waking to find that the water has carried the boat elsewhere. Nevertheless, however different the set-up, this is redoing Ouyang Xiu's famous lyric to the same tune.²⁷ If elsewhere we have seen an ordinary line of poetry being transformed into a great line in song lyric, here we see a great moment in song lyric "transformed," but borrowing its own charm from the superior predecessor.

We could add the more famous Ye Mengde 葉夢得 (1077–1148) as "Two-thirds of Su Shi" (acknowledging that Su Shi's genius was part of the missing third), but the point is clear: song lyric seemed at a dead end. Wang Zhuo has only modest praise for lyricists after the generation born in the mid-eleventh century. Ethical judgments are deeply tied to his aesthetic judgments. Where the two are forced apart—where he cannot reconcile them—we have an important lyricist. This is Li Qingzhao.

Li Qingzhao²⁸

In the context of this chapter, we will reconsider Wang Zhuo's judgment of Li Qingzhao's work and try to set it in a contemporary context, noting

27. See "Ouyang Xiu and His Collections" in Chapter 5, "The Xiaoling Collections (II)."

28. Facing Ronald Egan's recent monumental and meticulous study of Li Qingzhao in

how her extant works have been shaped by the particular venues that preserve them. We do not know what her fuller collection looked like. Wang Zhuo's ethical denunciation of the person and the lyrics is the precise parallel of the situation with Cao Zu. In both cases the lyricist is criticized for his or her lyrics, but our extant lyrics depend primarily on the selection preserved in Zeng Zao's *Yuefu yaci*, which excludes the kind of lyrics for which both were damned. We will never see the "naughty" Li Qingzhao, if indeed there was one.

There is, however, a profound difference between Wang Zhuo's treatment of Li Qingzhao and his treatment of other lyricists of her era. He praises her lyrics in terms that are comparable only to his praise of Su Shi. His entry on Li Qingzhao could easily be excerpted to demonstrate that he hated her work; it could also be excerpted to show that he thought that she was, with Su Shi, the greatest of all lyricists. These contrary judgments are made side by side. Sadly, we cannot read the works of Li Qingzhao that Wang Zhuo knew; we can read only Zeng Zao's "expurgated" collection and some other lyrics in early sources. We find Zhu Dunru writing a companion piece to a Li Qingzhao lyric we no longer have; we can only dimly sense the original behind Zhu Dunru's peculiar alchemical gift to transform gold into lead.²⁹ Li Qingzhao was, moreover, a magnet, and her collection steadily grew with dubious additions.

Li Qingzhao gave us a partial account of her life more intimate than anything else we have in the Song. This, combined with the long-standing Chinese urge to simplistically link lyric and life, has led to a biographical reading and dating of her lyrics. This is not a useful enterprise. She is the person who tells us that song lyric is *not* classical poetry. And unlike her famous contemporary Ye Mengde, who dates every banal occasion, Li Qingzhao's lyrics are not often accompanied by occasional subtitles.³⁰ The omission of subtitles is one of the most significant markers of what we have been calling "song lyric proper."³¹

almost four hundred pages, I cannot add much in a book like this. I will leave my readers to go on to Egan's work. There is, indeed, so much scholarship on Li Qingzhao that I will try to deal with topics less often addressed.

29. Deng Zimian 2008A, 116.

30. The absence of occasional subtitles may be simply due to the tendency of *Yuefu yaci* to elide all or part of the subtitles more fully provided in other venues.

31. This changed in the mid-twelfth century.

Du Fu was referred to as *jidachengzhe* 集大成者, roughly translated as “the one who brought it all together,” and—we must add—left his individual stamp on the whole. This term has been applied to Zhou Bangyan, where it sits uneasily. Li Qingzhao properly deserves it. One sees the past of song lyric throughout her work, but it takes learned effort—because it all seems uniquely her own. She had the gift that was the greatest promise of song lyric: to give poetry a voice.

Wang Zhuo was troubled by her biography, her remarriage and subsequent divorce initiated by Li Qingzhao herself, and by certain aspects of her lyrics that can no longer be adequately guessed at because of the loss of most of her work. Such judgments were the norm of the age. Yet he could not deny her genius.³²

易安居士，京東路提刑李格非文叔之女建康守趙明誠德甫之妻。自少年便有詩名，才力華贍，逼近前輩，在士大夫中已不多得。若本朝婦人，當推詞采第一。趙死，再嫁某氏，訟而離之，晚節流蕩無歸。作長短句，能曲折盡人意，輕巧尖新，姿態百出，間巷荒淫之語，肆意落筆，自古搢紳之家能文婦女，未見如此無顧忌也。陳後主游宴，使女學士狎客賦詩相贈答，採其尤艷麗者，被以新聲，不過“璧月夜夜滿”、“瓊樹朝朝新”等語。李戡嘗痛元白詩纖艷不逞，非莊士雅人，多為其破壞，流於民間，子父女母，交口教授，淫言媒語，冬寒夏熱，入人肌骨，不可除去。二公集尚存可考也。元與白書，自謂近世婦人，暈淡眉目，綰約頭鬢，衣服脩廣之度，及匹配色澤，尤劇怪艷，因為題詩百餘首。今集中不載。元會真詩，白夢游春詩，所謂纖艷不逞，淫言媒語，止此耳。溫飛卿號多作側辭艷曲，其甚者“合歡桃葉終堪恨，裏許元來別有人”，“玲瓏骰子安紅豆，入骨相思知不知”。亦止此耳。今之士大夫學曹組諸人鄙穢歌詞，則為艷麗如陳之女學士狎客，為纖艷不逞淫言媒語如元白，為側詞艷曲如溫飛卿，皆不敢也。其風至閨房婦女，誇張筆墨，無所羞畏，殆不可使李戡見也。

The Layperson Yi'an (Li Qingzhao) was the daughter of Li Gefei (Wenshu), judicial commissioner of the Jingdong Circuit, and the wife of Zhao Mingcheng (Defu), Governor of Jiankang. Even in her youth she was famous for her classical poetry; and the splendid richness of her talents was close upon the heels of the preceding generation, which is hard enough to find even among gentlemen. Of the women in this dynasty she should be placed first in literary talent. When Zhao Mingcheng died, she

32. Wang and Yue, 41. For a further discussion of this passage, see Egan 2013, 58–63.

remarried a certain person, then filed suit against him and left him. In her later years she roamed about with nowhere to go.³³

She wrote lyrics that were able to fully capture all the fine points of what goes on in a person's mind: with easy flair, sharp and fresh, every manner of mood appeared in them. But with the coarse, indecent language of the back alleys, she let her thoughts go wild as she wrote. There has never been seen such a lack of circumspection about giving offense ever since there were women of official families who could write.

When the last ruler of the Chen dynasty would hold parties, he would have his "women scholars" and his intimate courtiers write to and answer one another, then he chose the most sensual and gorgeous pieces and had them set to new tunes. But these never went beyond lines like "The moon-disk is full every night" and "Alabaster tree, renewed every morning at dawn." Li Kan once faulted Yuan Zhen's and Bai Juyi's poems for the dissoluteness of their delicate sensuality: "Many who were not gentlemen of the highest principles have been ruined by them. They circulate among the common people, with fathers and sons, mothers and daughters teaching them to each other orally. Their lewd phrases and seductive words, through winter's cold and summer's heat, entered people's flesh and bones until no one can get rid of them." The literary collections of these two gentlemen still survive and can be checked. In a letter Yuan Zhen wrote to Bai Juyi, he himself said: "The women of recent times, with their measure of light and dark in powder and mascara, tied up hair, and the length of their gowns, when it suits their color and luster, is the extreme of uncanny sensual beauty; and therefore I have written over a hundred poems about this." These are not included in his present collection. What Li Kan referred to as the "dissoluteness of their delicate sensuality" and "lewd phrases and seductive words" are limited to Yuan's "Poem on Meeting the Immortal" and Bai's "Dream of Roaming in Spring." Wen Tingyun was stigmatized for often composing improper phrases and voluptuous songs, the most extreme being: "The acacia and the peach leaf are hateful in the end, / within them there has always been someone else,"³⁴ and "Sparkling are the dice set with red beans, / longing enters into the bone, do you understand or not?"³⁵ In this case too it is limited to things like this. Gentlemen these days imitate the vile and obscene song lyrics of Cao Zu and his ilk. There are those who wrote

33. This is ambiguous and may mean that she acted without restraint.

34. Playing on *ren* 人 (someone else) and *ren* 仁 (the soft kernel inside a hard pit).

35. Dice were often made of bone with red dots indicating the number. The "red bean" is a plant, known as the "seed of [love] longing."

in a "sensual and gorgeous manner" like the Chen women scholars and intimate courtiers who wrote the "sensual and gorgeous"; there are those who wrote "dissoluteness of delicate sensuality" and "lewd phrases and seductive words" like Yuan Zhen and Bai Juyi; there are those who wrote "improper phrases and sensual songs" like Wen Tingyun—but none of them would dare [go to the extremes of Cao Zu]. When his influence reaches women in their chambers, making a show of brush and ink without shame or apprehension, then we had better not let Li Kan see it.

I have included the entire passage because Wang Zhuo is clearly trying to show that he is not being excessively priggish and believes he has cause for claiming that this style is "unprecedented." Li Qingzhao is clearly included here. Yes, he tells us, predecessors have been scandalized by certain earlier poets, but such transgressions are laughably insignificant. The implicit claim is that Li Qingzhao, for all her genius, crossed a line that trivialized earlier verse stigmatized as improper. Whatever Wang Zhuo was reading in making such a judgment, we cannot find it in Li Qingzhao's extant works. The way he has built his argument—by dismissing earlier judgments of eroticism—suggests a kind of verse that did not survive over the years.

The situation of preservation for Li Qingzhao's lyrics is very similar to that of Cao Zu. She has five lyrics from *Meiyuan*, and it is hard to be lewd when writing on plum blossoms. The largest group of her lyrics is the twenty-three preserved in *Yuefu yaci*, which excludes any risqué lyrics. There are two lyrics from the *Quangfang beizu*, one from *Tang Song zhuxian juemiao cixuan*, one from *Yangchun baixue*, and two from *Leibian Caotang shiyu*. After that the sources are all later. The numerous citations of now lost lyrics tell us that the original collection was considerably larger, and there is little doubt that Wang Zhuo had access to some version of it. Li Qingzhao had her detractors, and "malicious attribution" is distinctly possible.³⁶ But the more probable conclusion is that Li Qingzhao did indeed write bawdy lyrics—and if Wang Zhuo's supposition is correct, she wrote them in her later years. She may not have written a great many, but then again she may have—we will never know. What we know is that

36. It is a more credible possibility for Li Qingzhao than for Ouyang Xiu because by this point "malicious attribution" was already a topic of contemporary discussion.

we have a skewed representation of her work, shaped by the particular constraints of the sources where they are preserved.

It doesn't matter if she wrote some verses in the style so popular in Huizong's reign (a style for which many of the terms of opprobrium used correspond to Wang Zhuo's criticism). Even Wang Zhuo can't deny her genius. The following is the first lyric in Zeng Zao's selection, to "Nan gezi" 南歌子:³⁷

天上星河轉，人間簾幕垂。涼生枕簟淚痕滋。起解羅衣、
聊問夜何其。
翠貼蓮蓬小，金銷藕葉稀。舊時天氣舊時衣。祇有情懷、
不似舊家時。

Up in Heaven the Star River turns,
in the mortal world the curtains are down.
A chill comes to pillow and mat, damp from tracks of tears.
She gets up and takes off her gossamer robe,
and casually asks "What time is it?"
Kingfisher feathers glued on, the lotus blooms are small,
gilt flecks away, the lotus leaves grow few.
The same old weather, the same old clothes.
Just the feelings in the heart
are not like they were before.

Most readers of Li Qingzhao would prefer the first-person pronoun in translation. We can never know what she intended. Such a preference on the part of her readers is a tribute to her mastery of the art of the genre: she voices commonplaces and adds new details so that it sounds intensely personal, and the commonplaces seem to emerge naturally from the moment. To close a lyric saying, in effect, "I don't feel the same way I used to" was a standard move, but the phrasing and the circumstances here make the sentiment come alive.

She begins by setting up an opposition between Heaven and the mortal world, and curtains dividing inside and outside, the figure of fabric developed in the second stanza. Heaven's motions mark passing time in the mortal world, though in Heaven itself nothing changes. The

37. Wang Zhongwen, 3. See Egan 2013, 345.

chill announces the transition from summer to autumn. That chill is felt first in the wetness of tear tracks, which mark another division between inside and outside, a sadness otherwise unspoken. The reticence to name the cause of sorrow intensifies it in the matter-of-fact outer appearances and utterances that follow.

Awareness of the first onset of autumn tells her to change from the light gossamer clothing of summer to her warmer autumn clothes. We do not know if her “casual” question, in the idiom of the *Classic of Poetry*, is addressed to a maidservant or to no one in particular. She would have to pull the curtains and go outside to find out, to look at the sky—but the song refuses to let things out directly.

The warmer clothes are figured with lotuses in appliqué, the plant whose bloom fades and whose leaves crumble with autumn. The appliqué lotuses would seem to defy seasonal change, but they are old clothes, and the gilt leaves seem to be showing wear, flecking away. They are not immortal but mirror the world outside. Autumn and her autumn clothes are familiar and recurrent—even though she has told us that indeed the clothes are showing the effect of time. This permits her to restate the familiar *xiaoling* ending, but as though it just came to mind when she thought about weather and clothes being the same. As with her tears, she doesn’t tell us what those “feelings in the heart” are, but the “not like” (*busi* 不似) always carries the implication of “can’t equal.”

It is a simple lyric, but one can find no better illustration of how perfectly written it is, and what an unforgiving genre song lyric is, than when we compare this to Li Qingzhao’s contemporaries.

There is great variety in Li Qingzhao’s lyrics (factoring in the disproportionate number of lyrics on plums and plants due to the sources where they are preserved). A few are to be found nowhere else on the map of song lyric, such as the following dream poem to “Yujia ao.”³⁸

天接雲濤連曉霧。星河欲轉千帆舞。彷彿夢魂歸帝所。聞天語。
殷勤問我歸何處。
我報路長嗟日暮。學詩謾有驚人句。九萬里風鵬正舉。風休住。
蓬舟吹取三山去。

38. Tang Guizhang 1999, 1202; Wang Zhongwen 2000, 6. See also Egan 2013, 49–51.

The Heavens touch cloud-billows, stretching to morning's fog,
 The River of Stars is going to turn, a thousand sails dance.
 In a blur it seemed my dreaming soul went to the god's place,
 I heard Heaven speak,
 earnestly asking me where I was going.
 I answered that my road is long, and, alas, day turns to dusk.
 In studying poetry I have lines that amaze people in vain.
 In a ninety-thousand league wind, the Peng bird now rises.
 May the wind not stop,
 Blow my tiny boat off to the three immortal mountains.

There is no readily available anonymous persona here; we are compelled to translate in the first person. We begin with a morning scene over a vast sweep of water, either the ocean or the Yangzi River. The dawn scene sets up her own "road" as dusk is falling; the sails anticipate her own tiny boat. She flies off to the dwelling of the high god, who asks her with a solicitous urgency where she is going. The high god does not usually do this—but it is a dream.

She answers the high god with a series of allusions and references. Though her commentators do not mention it, her first answer unmistakably recalls the avenger Wu Zixu. After flogging the corpse of his father's killer, the King of Chu, Wu Zixu is upbraided by his former friend Bao Xu of Shen, who tells him that his revenge has gone too far and is in opposition to Heaven (what is right). Wu Zixu responds: "For me, day turns to dusk and my road is long" (*wu ri mu tu yuan* 吾日暮途遠).³⁹ Li Qingzhao's answer restates this, changing *tu* 途 to the synonymous and more common *lu* 路. A resonant phrase like Wu Zixu's carries its follow-up clause, which every reader knows, that Wu will "carry it out against all," explained in the standard commentary as carrying out his purpose (*zhi* 志). One violent purpose leads to another with a determination equal to Wu Zixu's, as Li Qingzhao echoes Du Fu's famous line: "If my words do not amaze people, I will not stop in death" (語不驚人死不休).⁴⁰ Then we shift to the opening parable of the *Zhuangzi*, of

39. Sima Qian, *Shiji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), pp. 2176–77.

40. QTs 11167.

the great Peng, a bird of unimaginable dimensions, whose wings stretch from one horizon to another, depending on a wind rising ninety-thousand leagues to carry it from the Northern Ocean to the Southern Deeps. Dimensions suddenly shrink to her tiny boat, which she asks to be blown to the isles of the immortals.

Ronald Egan stresses her frustration that her lines that do "amaze" people do so in vain. It might be helpful here to note that in his last poems Du Fu often figured himself as the Peng, on his way to the "Southern Deeps." Li Qingzhao adds the *zheng* 正 ("just now") rising. Egan is quite right that this is like nothing else in song lyric.

In the twelfth century we find a style known as the "Yi'an ti" 易安體 (Yi'an being Li Qingzhao's pseudonym "the Layperson Yi'an"), imitated on several occasions. From the imitations and some of her extant works, these were lyrics in the "high style," with vernacular phrases mixed in. Earlier vernacular lyric in the late eleventh and very early twelfth century was far lower in register, but it was used primarily in the monologue of a lover. Long lyrics in the "high style" sometimes used vernacular phrases in the closing, often as the impassioned utterance of feelings that could not be contained in the high style.⁴¹ Li Qingzhao moved in and out of the vernacular almost seamlessly, on topics that would normally be done in the "high style" (at least in the extant lyrics). One of the best examples is her lyric to "Niannu jiao":⁴²

蕭條庭院，又斜風細雨，重門須閉。
 寵柳嬌花寒食近，種種惱人天氣。
 險韻詩成，扶頭酒醒，別是閑滋味。
 征鴻過盡，萬千心事難寄。
 樓上幾日春寒，簾垂四面，玉闌干慵倚。
 被冷香消新夢覺，不許愁人不起。
 清露晨流，新桐初引，多少游春意。
 日高煙斂，更看今日晴未。

41. See, for example, the closing of Zhou Bangyan's "Fengliuzi" in Chapter 12, "Zhou Bangyan," p. 328-29.

42. Tang Guizhang 1999, 1208; Wang Zhongwen, 49. Note that while this lyric is in several early anthologies, it is not included in the *Yuefu yaci*, the largest selection. This is, presumably, because of its use of the vernacular.

My garden is dreary,
 once again slanting wind and fine rain,
 and all the gates must stay closed.
 Dear willows and charming flowers show that Cold Food Festival is
 near,
 all sorts of bothersome weather.
 Poems with hard rhymes are done,
 I sober up from the strong ale—
 a flavor of ennui all its own.
 The migrating swan-geese have all passed by,
 I can't send the millions of thoughts and cares off with them.
 How many days upstairs in spring's cold,
 with the curtains hanging down on all sides,
 and me, too lazy to lean on the jade railing?
 The covers are chilly, the scent gone as I wake from a new dream—
 it doesn't let the sad person not get up.
 The clear dew rolls off in the morning,
 the new tung tree begins to sprout—
 so much desire to go on a spring outing!
 As the sun gets higher, the mist melts away,
 and we'll see if today will be clear or not.

The two extant imitations of the "Yi'an style" (one by none other than Xin Qiji) dutifully include vernacular phrases, but they do not use the vernacular as Li Qingzhao does, to naturalize and animate the conventional scene of boudoir ennui. One never sees the playful irritation at the cold covers that "do not let the . . . person not get up." It culminates in expectantly watching how the weather will be today.

If one can look past the morass of banal lyrics surviving from Huizong's reign and the early years of the Southern Song—including the ever-increasing number of "Happy Birthday" lyrics—we can see glimmers and remnants of a livelier period. In what remains of Li Qingzhao's lyrical work, we probably see the best of it. When the vitality of lyric returned in the second half of the twelfth century, after some decades, the genre had become literature, and was no longer just a good song.

Conclusion by Way of Continuing

The story of how a performance practice became an elite literary genre has, I hope, been clear in the preceding pages. Song lyric continued to thrive and change through the end the Southern Song, and in the Yuan dynasty it faded into the elite literary archive. As with the older classical genres, later lyricists would return to draw on this past and extend it in new directions. Indeed, song lyric was to become one of the most successful classical genres from the sixteenth century well into the twentieth century.

There was, however, another story developing out of this transformation, and this story had large consequences. We see this story fully emerge in the early twelfth century, in the split between the “high style” and vernacular or mixed-register lyrics associated with witty and playful eroticism. We see it in the inclusion of vernacular lyrics in a lover’s voice in late eleventh-century collections such as that of Huang Tingjian, with lyrics more likely to evoke a smile than lust. We see it in the splitting up of Ouyang Xiu’s lyric collection and the exclusion of certain lyrics from *Jinti yuefu*, based on the assumption that they were written by others and maliciously attributed to Ouyang Xiu. We also see it in the collection of Liu Yong, whose lyrics move between the palace and the entertainment quarter, and further into the provinces. It is possible that such a mix of high and low had its origins in the repertoires of singers, who

might need just such a variety of lyrics to respond to different audiences, different moods of a party, or different levels of inebriation.¹

To witty and playfully bawdy songs we need to add lyrics based on word games, as in Wang Zhuo's citation of Moqi Yong's boast at having combined three tune titles into a seven-syllable line. The reader of Yuan "vernacular lyrics," *sanqu* 散曲, will find this variety very familiar. There are some vernacular lyricists who prefer a version of the "high style," but many vernacular lyricists have a variety of songs, ranging from the "high style" to joking and bawdy songs, and frequently songs based on word games.

We have scattered examples of lyrics from the Southern Song that suggest that the practice of song lyric in modes other than the "high style" continued. The textual record, however, is overwhelmingly either lyrics in the "high style" (*yaci*) or lyrics in the Su Shi tradition. In other words, as song lyric became increasingly legitimate as a literary form, it drew a strict border against other kinds of song practice, a kind of generic "class distinction." That border was policed. Intruders, such as some of the lyrics in Zeng Zao's library and parts of Ouyang Xiu's lyric collection, were identified and deported. Liu Yong's character was vilified, and his lyrics were dismissed as "wild wolf drool." When Cao Zu's filial son tried to print his father's literary collection, the emperor ordered the printing blocks destroyed. It is a harsh regime.

But the taverns and high-class bordellos remained through the Southern Song. And I would be surprised to learn that the "culture police" did not often themselves visit such places and enjoy the bawdy, witty songs they publicly so abhorred. That version of song culture would eventually reemerge in a new kind of literature that took pride in its low-status vernacular in song, play, and story. One of its countercultural heroes was "Liu Sanbian," Liu Yong.

1. See Appendix C: "The 'High Style' and Its Opposites."

APPENDIX A

The Manuscripts of Feng Yansi

Here we must address one of those textual messes on which some important issues hang. Probably in response to Chen Shixiu's assertion that Feng Yansi's collection of lyrics was lost, we have two different claims of an early sighting of the whole collection. The most extensive of these is attributed to Cui Gongdu 崔公度, a prominent member of the Wang Anshi government. He supposedly wrote a colophon on the Feng Yansi collection in the Yuanfeng reign (1078–85).¹ This is cited twice in the late twelfth century and once in the thirteenth. There are some significant divergences in the way it is cited. In his colophon on the *Jinti yuefu*, Luo Bi 羅泌 mentions its presence in the *Xin'an Gazetteer* (*Xin'an zhi* 新安志), printed in 1175. This is one of the few gazetteers that survive from the Song. Luo Bi also mentions the *Tongrui Gazetteer* (*Tongrui zhi* 桐汭志), which does not survive.

This is how the account is given in the *Xin'an zhi*:²

馮相國樂府號陽春錄者，馮氏子孫泗州推官璪，嘗以示晏元獻公，公以為真賞。至元豐中，高郵崔公度伯易跋，以為李氏既有江左，文物甲天下。而馮公才華風流，又為江左第一。其家所藏集乃光祿公手鈔，最

1. Cui Gongdu has a biography in *Song shi*, *juan* 353. His surviving prose can be found in QSw 1653, vol. 76, p. 1.

2. Wang Zhaopeng 2004, 91; *Song Yuan fangzhi congkan* 宋元方志叢刊 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), vol. 8, p. 7764.

為詳確。而尊前花間諸集中往往謬其姓氏。近時所鏤歐陽永叔詞，亦多有之。皆傳失其真本也。崔公云。

The *yuefu* of Minister Feng [Yansi] is called *The Account of Bright Spring*. A descendant of the Feng Family, Zao, Judge in Sizhou, once showed it to Yan Shu, and he considered it something truly worthy of appreciation. In the Yuanfeng reign [1078–85] Cui Gongdu, style Boyi, of Gaoyou wrote a colophon for it, considering that when the Li family ruled the Southland, their cultural artifacts were the best in the empire, and that Lord Feng's talent and panache were, moreover, foremost in the Southland. The version of the collection in the family library was indeed the autograph copy by the Grand Master of Splendid Happiness himself [Feng Yansi], and was the most accurate and complete. Yet the *Zunqian ji*, the *Huajian ji*, and individual collections had misattributions. The recently printed edition of Ouyang Xiu's lyrics also contains many of them, and in every case they erred from the authentic version. That's what Cui said.

Luo Bi³

元豐中崔公度跋馮延巳陽春錄，謂皆延巳親筆。其間有誤入六一詞者，近世桐汭志新安志亦記其事。今觀延巳之詞，往往自與唐花間集尊前集相混。

In the Yuanfeng reign Cui Gongdu did a colophon for Feng Yansi's *Account of Bright Spring*, claiming that they were all in Feng Yansi's own hand, and among them there were those incorrectly included in [Ouyang Xiu's] *Liuyi's Lyrics*. In recent times the *Tongrui zhi* and the *Xin'an zhi* have also noted this. Now when we look over Feng Yansi's lyrics, everywhere they are mixed in with those in *Huajian ji* and *Zunqian ji*.

Chen Zhensun⁴

高郵崔公度伯易題其後，稱其家所藏最為詳確。而尊前花間諸集往往謬其姓氏。近傳歐陽永叔詞亦多有之。皆失其真也。

Cui Gongdu, style Boyi, of Gaoyou wrote at the end, saying that the version in the family library is the most accurate and complete, and the

3. Wu Changshou, 42.

4. Chen Zhensun, 65.

Zunqian ji, the *Huajian ji*, and individual collections everywhere had misattributions. The recently transmitted lyrics of Ouyang Xiu also contain many of them, and in every case they erred from the authentic version.

The location of this manuscript is apparently the family home of the Fengs, whose copy was supposedly seen and admired by Yan Shu before Chen Shixiu did his preface. However, Cui Gongdu notes the problems as we find them in the Chen Shixiu edition; and if Luo Bi and Chen Zhensun saw an edition purporting to follow from the family copy, it was about the same size as the Chen Shixiu edition; Chen Zhensun notes only a single difference in the two collections. If the Feng family had a manuscript in Feng Yansi's own hand, there was no "larger and largely lost" version of the collection, as Chen Shixiu claims. Moreover, Chen Shixiu's virtually identical edition would have been a fraud.

To carry off this claim that there was an edition written in Feng Yansi's own hand requires that all the lyrics with multiple attributions be Feng Yansi's own. Cui Gongdu offers a patently absurd explanation of the considerable percentage of lyrics found elsewhere by asserting that everyone else—including the editor of *Huajian ji*—got the names wrong. One particularly troublesome point is the reference to a printed edition or editions of Ouyang Xiu's lyrics in the Yuanfeng reign. This would predate the next mention of printing a collection of lyrics by about seventy years. It is remotely possible that such a collection might have been published to capitalize on gossip about Ouyang Xiu's romantic escapades; however, with all the wealth of anecdotal material on Ouyang Xiu, no one else mentions an edition of his song lyrics, much less a printed edition, until the mid-twelfth century. But then we have the final note: "This is [all] what Mister Cui said" (崔公云).

Luo Bi's version is more credible, marking a difference in time between Cui Gongdu's claim and his own comment (using "now when we look at" [今觀] following the mention of the gazetteer sources for Cui's colophon), which in part duplicates what is clearly marked as Cui Gongdu's comment in *Xin'an zhi*.

This account in the *Xin'an zhi*, ostensibly quoting a colophon from the Yuanfeng reign, contains a remarkable number of "firsts." It would

be the first time I have seen a family claim to have the authoritative version of a collection of song lyrics; it would indeed be the earliest colophon to a song lyric collection; as far as I can tell, it would be the first mention of the *Huajian ji* in the Song; it is certainly the first reference to the *Zunqian ji*; it would be the earliest reference to a printed edition of song lyric; and last but not least, it would be the first reference to the problem of multiple attributions, which so concerned Southern Song scholars from the mid-twelfth century on.

When we see so many “firsts” in one short document, it is either a precious piece of evidence whose worth has not been fully appreciated, or it is a later forgery that betrays itself by its numerous anachronisms.

When we raise the issue of forgery, we should consider the possible motive. In this case the motive could hardly be clearer. Chen Shixiu's preface was a terribly embarrassing affront to the Feng family. A descendant of Feng Yansi on the distaff side had compiled and preserved in *his* family the works of a very distinguished Feng ancestor. The only way the family could redeem their reputation would be to have the “original” copy. They probably produced one, claiming it was in Feng Yansi's own hand. Yan Shu's well-known appreciation of Feng's lyrics was transposed into a story of Yan Shu's appreciation of the Feng family manuscript (certainly the first time anyone had shown appreciation for a *manuscript* of song lyrics). Cui Gongdu's colophon, so fraught with anachronisms, was probably produced to authenticate their version and explain away the mess of the collection.

If we read Luo Bi's version in this context, it becomes very interesting. Luo Bi was a considerable scholar, who seems to have been “repairing” the problematic claims of the “Cui Gongdu” text. He used *wei* 謂 (“claims that”) to establish a distance between the report and his own opinions. Chen Zhensun also uses a distancing verb for Cui Gongdu's claims, in this case *cheng* 稱. Luo Bi repeats the claim that the manuscript—he doesn't say in the Feng family—was in Feng Yansi's own hand. He doesn't refer to printed editions of Ouyang Xiu's song lyrics from around 1080 (preparing his own edition of Ouyang Xiu's lyrics he probably knew better). And he displaces the lyrics also found in *Huajian ji* and *Zunqian ji* to what we see “looking now” (今觀), in his own age in the late twelfth century. It is clear that he does not believe Cui Gongdu's claim that the *Huajian ji* attributions are erroneous.

Anachronism is dangerous because, if believed, it enters a chain of other arguments. In this case it establishes a date for the existence of *Zunqian ji*. Daniel Bryant, drawing on Chinese and Japanese scholarship, dates *Zunqian ji* 尊前集 to 1040–80.⁵ He bases this on Wang Zhongwen's dating of the collection in the *Nan Tang erzhu ci jiaoding*, which in turn is based on Chen Zhensun's version and the reign date given in Luo Bi. Our current text from the *Baijia ci* has Chen's preface but not Cui's colophon. Moreover, Chen Zhensun notes the absence of a lyric beginning "The wind first rises" (風乍起) from his version; this lyric is, however, found in the *Baijia ci* version.

5. Bryant 1994, 303.

APPENDIX B

Lyrics Adrift

The following lyric to “Pusa man” is best known through its inclusion in *Nan Tang erzhu ci* as belonging to Li Yu.¹

花明月暗籠輕霧。今宵好向郎邊去。劃襪步香階。手提金縷鞋。
畫堂南畔見。一向偎人顫。奴為出來難。教君恣意憐。

The flowers are bright, the moon is dark,
enshrouded in light fog.
Tonight is best to go off to my lover's side.
In stocking feet I step on the fragrant stairs.
In my hands I hold my slippers with golden threads.
I meet him by the south side of the painted hall.
For a moment I cuddle against him trembling.
Because it's hard for me to get out.
I would have you love me as much as you want.

Li Yu is so beloved, and his lyrics in *Nan Tang erzhu ci* are so few, that editors fiercely resist sacrificing a single one to other claimants—especially to an obscure lyricist like Du Anshi. *Nan Tang erzhu ci* claims *Zunqian ji* as its source—though we have no idea from where or when *Zunqian ji* got its text. Like Du Anshi's collection, the earliest extant edition of *Zunqian ji* is *Baijia ci*.

1. Zeng Zhaomin, 754.

In *Quan Song ci* Tang Guizhang concedes Li Yu's authorship and does not bother to include it, but it is there in the original *Baijia ci* version of Du Anshi's collected lyrics.

Here is the text in the *Baijia ci* version on Du Anshi's collection, underlining the differences from the "Li Yu" version:

花明月暗朦朧露。此時欲往郎邊去。剗襪下香階。手攜金縷鞋。
藥闌東畔見。執手僂人顛。奴為出來難。從君恣意憐。

Even though we have fifteen variant characters out of forty-four (over one-third), everyone can recognize this as the "same" lyric.² I am not concerned with whether this text is by Li Yu or by Du Anshi—I suspect it is by neither, but simply an assignation lyric that was in the repertoire, origin unknown, changing in different iterations.

This is, however, the kind of textual "drift" we would expect in transmitted song—and consonant with the kind of "drift" Yan Jidao saw when his lyrics were recollected from singers. The real interest here is that in the multiple attributions among the *xiaoling* lyricists, we find many variants, but rarely anything on this scale (more than a third).

Here we must consider the very little we can know about Du Anshi. It is clear that he spent time in Sichuan and was in Lingnan. We do not see him in Bianjing. So we might understand this as the "drift" of a song-text as it disperses toward the farther provinces.

This invites a corresponding conclusion—however obvious from our general historical knowledge—that the venues of mid-eleventh century performance for Feng Yansi, Yan Shu, and Ouyang Xiu represented a very small and closed elite community in Bianjing. Even if attributions varied significantly, there was less distance across which textual "drift" could occur.

2. The *lu* 露 in the first line is an obvious miswriting of *wu* 霧 in the Li Yu version.

APPENDIX C

The "High Style" and Its Opposites

Moqi Yong divided his lyric collection into "lyrics in the high style" (*yaci*) and "the voluptuous" (*ceyan*). This was an evolving binary with "lyrics in the high style" as the stable term around which a series of associated opposites were designated. In his preface to *Yuefu yaci*, Zeng Zao excluded lyrics that involved "rascally wit" (*xiexue* 諧謔). Wang Zhuo used other terms for wit and humor. The third aspect of the antithesis to "lyrics in the high style" was the register of language, even though *su* 俗, the standard antonym of *ya*, is not usually used. Li Qingzhao singled out Liu Yong's diction as *chenxia* 塵下, roughly translated as "base." One could be "witty" or use low diction without being "voluptuous," but the three aspects often came together. If a work were amorous in "the high style," terms other than *ceyan* might be used.

We have been talking about twelfth-century comments. When we go back to the late eleventh century, we find in many lyric collections a sprinkling of lyrics that are both vernacular and erotic at the same time. We also might note that they often do not use the standard tune titles. Recall that the reasons the critics adduced doubting the "naughty" Ouyang Xiu lyrics in *Zuiweng qinqu waipian* are: 1) their erotic content, 2) their diction, and 3) their use of tune titles that do not appear in *Jinti yuefu*. Their presence, however, seems consistent with a full collection.

We might note the literary community's growing inclination to purge anything not in the "high style" over the course of the twelfth

century. In Wang Zhuo we read that Moqi Yong removed his own "voluptuous" (*ceyan*) lyrics. Anthologies like *Yuefu yaci* and *Song Lyrics Restoring the High Style* (*Fuya geci* 復雅歌辭) have their ideology written into their titles. In this context Luo Bi's purge of Ouyang Xiu's lyric collection was but one moment in an ongoing process that has left such a distorted picture of song lyric, particularly of the early twelfth century. Modern scholars, looking for eroticism and diction as the criteria for exclusion, might consider the associations of a tune title as another possible grounds for exclusion.

On the level of hypothesis, this mixture may have had its origins in the repertoires of singers. If the male audience got very inebriated, they might have been provided with more "lively" lyrics and appropriate melodies to follow the mood of the party. This casts a new light on the story of Yan Shu holding a party, drinking to the performance of song, then dismissing the singers so that the gentlemen could compose classical poems. That dismissal may have been the point of interest in the anecdote. If the party went on, the guests would then have become increasingly inebriated. The singers and their musicians would have sensed the right moment to shift the register and theme of the songs as well as the music.

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Sources

As the reader of this book will have seen, the uncertainties with sources of Northern Song lyric are numerous. The primary question in many cases is twofold: how was the first version of a collection made, and what happened to that collection in its transmission to sources we can access? This is rarely an issue of concern for Chinese textual scholars, who mostly focus their discussions on how later collections were made.

It is fair to say that the large-scale bibliography of lyric appears first in Chen Zhensun's 陳振孫 *Zhizhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解題. He was clearly acquiring the early thirteenth-century printing of *Lyrics by a Hundred Masters* (*Baijia ci* 百家詞), and at the time of compiling the bibliography, he was still about eight titles short of completing the series (Deng Zimian 2008B, 4). He listed what he had, while expressing reservations about the quality of such commercial editions. By the thirteenth century I doubt that anyone could trace the lineage of a much earlier lyric collection well enough to judge what a "good edition" was.

The *Baijia ci* is such an important source that it needs to be followed a bit further. It reappears with some titles missing and other titles added in Wu Ne's 吳訥 (1372–1457) version, surviving in two partial early Ming manuscripts from 1441, which was photo-reprinted in 1989 by Tianjin guji chubanshe. At this point we see that things took shape based on editorial preference. The bibliophile Mao Jin 毛晉 (1599–1659) claimed to have Song copies of most of the *Baijia ci*; and having direct access to those problematic editions might have been preferable to following Wu Ne's manuscript copies from roughly two centuries earlier. Unfortunately, we no longer have these Song editions and therefore cannot assess them independently. What we have is Mao Jin's *Song liushi mingjia ci* 宋六十名家詞, which was in progress around 1630 (actually containing sixty-one collections). These are based on the editions that

Mao Jin had collected. The problem is that these were recut editions, with an unknown amount of editorial intervention, as was—and still is—common. Comparing these editions with the Ming manuscript versions shows significant differences. Although Mao wrote colophons, in many cases we don't know what the base editions were. Mao apparently had incomplete copies of the *Liushijia ci* 六十家詞, another Song compendium that appeared still later than the Song *Baijia ci*.

The best source for miscellaneous Song editions is *Yingkan Song Jin Yuan Mingben ci* 景刊宋金元明本詞, whose basic version was compiled by Wu Changshou 吳昌綬 (ca. 1867–1924) and augmented by the banker Tao Xiang 陶湘 (1870–1939). The first series was published between 1911 and 1917. This was photo-reprinted by Shanghai guji chubanshe in 1989. Some of these editions survive, and some do not. It is instructive, for example, to place the *Yingkan* edition of Chen Yuanlong's edition of Zhou Bangyan side by side with the photo-reprint of the Southern Song edition held by the Beijing Library, reproduced in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*. The first thing we note is the absence of the seals in the *Yingkan* edition; but while there are slight differences in the hand, the reproduction is good.

Each early collection and anthology has its own distinct history, and some of these histories reveal a bewildering complexity. Manuscripts played a far larger role than is commonly believed.

Abbreviations

Compendia

- QSB *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記. Series 1–6. Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2003–13.
- QSS *Quan Song shi* 全宋詩. 72 vols. Beijing: Beijing daxue chuanshe, 1991–98. This series is numbered continuously.
- QSW *Quan Song wen* 全宋文. 360 vols. Shanghai and Hefei: Shanghai cishu chubanshe and Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 2006. Each volume in this series is numbered independently.
- QTS *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1960. Often reprinted. This is cited by the number given in Hiraoka Takeo 平岡武夫, Ichihara Kokichi 市原亨吉, and Imai Kiyoshi 今井清. *Tōdai no shihen* 唐代の詩篇. Tang Civilization Reference Series 11–12; Kyoto: Institute for Humanistic Studies, 1964–65.

- SBCK *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊. Shanghai; Shangwu, 1919–36. In three series.
- SKQS *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書. Ms. late 1770s to 1782. Digital version, *Wenyuan ge Siku quanshu dianziban* 文淵閣四庫全書電子版. Hong Kong: Zhongwen daxue and Digital Heritage publishing, 3rd edition, 2007.

for *Quan Song ci* see Tang Guizhang 1999.

for *Quan Tang Wudai ci* see Zeng Zhaomin.

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INDEX

"Account of the Northern Ward" ("Beili zhi"), 74
 advertising, 80–81, 85–86, 275, 340
 allusion, 56, 208, 276, 321, 332; Li Qingzhao and, 352, 382; versus poetic material 335; in Yan Shu, 120. *See also* reference
 An Lushan Rebellion, 53, 290
 anthologies, 21, 29, 34, 51, 157, 395. *See also* specific titles
 artfulness, 16–17, 270–73, 323, 340
 Ashmore, Robert, 24–25n7, 170, 172
 attribution, 6, 6n4, 11–13, 56, 298–99n23; and early circulation, 24, 28–31, 42; He Zhu and, 298–99n23; malicious attribution, 128, 379, 385; misattribution, 34, 388–90; Ouyang Xiu and, 125–26, 125n1, 139–40, 147; and textual "drift," 393; and the *xiaoling* songbooks, 100–3, 100n4–5, 110, 158–61; Yan Shu and, 116
 authorial presence, 202–3
 authority, centralized, 1, 101, 199
 authorship, 5–6, 393; and early circulation, 25, 33; Liu Yong and, 67; Su Shi and, 199, 203, 232; the *xiaoling* songbooks and, 101n5, 139, 144; Yan Jidao and, 170. *See also* attribution
 autobiographical mode, 64–67, 198, 225

 Bai, Juyi, 56, 120, 217–21, 378–79; "Drawing a Silver Pitcher from the Well's Bottom," 319–20; "Facing Ale," 54; "Song of the Pipa," 336–37
Baijia ci (*Lyrics by a Hundred Masters*), 7, 50, 99n2, 157–58, 392–93; and early circulation, 38; and Liu Yong, 69n8; and Li Zhiyi, 259; and the manuscripts of Feng Yansi, 391; and Yan Jidao, 172

banality, 111–12, 122, 242, 289, 332, 384
bense (song lyric proper), 14–15; Chao Duanli and, 241; He Zhu and, 285, 288, 295–96, 301, 303, 306–7; Huang Tingjian and, 254; Li Qingzhao and, 376; Li Zhiyi and, 347; Qin Guan and, 261–62, 264, 267, 277; Su Shi and, 198, 234; Wang Zhuo and, 360; Zhou Bangyan and, 334; Zhu Dunru and, 366
benshi ci (the real story behind the lyric), 16, 39, 262
bian (book, compilation), 27–28
biannian (chronologically arranged collection), 149, 198, 348
biji (miscellanies), 30, 158, 288, 343
Biji manzhi (*Random Notes from Emerald Cock Ward*), 17, 48, 348, 356, 359; and early circulation, 37, 40, 43; and Yan Jidao, 163
 biographical, the, 14; Cao Zu and, 376; Liu Yong and, 63–67; Qin Guan and, 262, 273; Yan Jidao and, 170–71; Zhang Xian and, 154; Zhou Bangyan and, 340. *See also* autobiographical mode
 blockage, 93, 327–33
 Bossler, Beverly, 45–46
 Bryant, Daniel, 391
bugu (not blocked). *See* blockage

 Cai, Jing, 169, 238, 241, 310n4
Cai Kuanfu shihua, 55
 canon, 15–17, 38, 244, 351, 354, 359; canon formation, 234–35
 Cao Zu, 38, 359–60, 364–66, 376–79, 386; "Yujia ao," 374–75; "Zui huayin," 373–74
 career, official: 2, 87–88, 98, 336–37
 Cen Shen, 112

- Censorate, the: Shu Dan and 15, 236; Su Shi and, 211, 224, 226, 259, 269
- cento (*jiju*), 140–42
- ceyan* (the voluptuous), 36n27, 37n28, 363–64, 363n4, 374, 394–95
- changduan ju* (song lyrics, lines of irregular length), 129
- chanting, 2, 65, 107, 214, 297. See also *yin* (reciting); *yinyong* (reciting)
- Chao, Buzhi: 229–31, 230n2, 348, 353, 360; and Chao Duanli, 237; *Chaoshi qinqu waipian*, 258; and early circulation, 37–38; and Huang Tingjian, 245–47, 246n2, 249; “Huang yinger,” 257–58; “Jiang shenzi,” 140–42; and Li Zhiyi, 260; “Mo yu’er,” 255–56; as protégé of Su Shi, 15, 244; “Qianqiu sui,” 258; and Qin Guan, 275
- Chao, Duanli, 15, 230, 352, 237–38; 363–64; “Ding fengbo,” 240–41; and early circulation, 37; “Lütou ya,” 238–39; and Qin Guan, 275; “Shangling chun,” 240; *Xianzhai qinqu waipian*, 237
- Chao, Qianzhi, 25n8, 33, 41, 344
- Chen, Shidao, 230, 232, 234, 348, 362; *Houshan shihua*, 160–61, 208, 246, 308; and Huang Tingjian, 247; “Liuzhou getou,” 161; “Nan kezi,” 242–43; “Pusa man,” 283–84; and Zhou Bangyan, 309
- Chen, Shixiu, 102; and early circulation, 30, 41; and the manuscripts of Feng Yansi, 387, 389–90; and Su Shi, 196, 198; *Yangchun ji*, 26–28, 50, 65, 99, 110; and Yan Shu, 116
- Chen, Tingzhuo, 296
- Chen, Yuanjing: *Suishi guangji*, 370
- Chen, Yuanlong, 42, 313–14, 334, 397
- Chen, Zhensun, 24n5, 343, 388–91; *Zhizhai shulu jieti*, 157, 166, 172, 396
- chujian* (at first sight), 74, 177, 320
- cihua* (remarks on song lyric), 34, 39, 158, 259, 357
- classical literature, 3, 6–7, 327, 349, 385; early circulation and, 34–35, 42; Huang Tingjian and, 247. See also classical poetry
- classical poetry, 2–4, 9, 14–15; appropriation, 140, 150–51, 246, 250–51; early circulation and, 27; He Zhu and, 297–98, 302; Liu Yong and, 65, 90–91, 93, 98; Li Zhiyi and, 348, 350; Ouyang Xiu and, 136, 140, 142, 147; Su Shi and, 197–98, 203, 208–11; Su Shi’s protégés and, 244–47, 257; and the *xiaoling* songbooks, 102, 105; Yan Jidao and, 170; Yan Shu and, 121; Zhang Xian and, 149–51, 157; Zhou Bangyan and, 312, 334–35; Zhu Dunru and, 366–67
- Classic of Poetry*, 356, 381
- class system, 45–46
- colophon: by Chao Qianzhi, 25n8, 33, 344; by Cui Gongdu, 50, 236, 387–91; by Huang Chang, 69, 273; by Li Zhiyi, 17, 37, 233–34, 289, 344–49, 352; by Luo Bi, 127, 387; by Qian Huan, 313; by Su Shi, 156; by Zeng Zao, 34, 40
- commerce, 1, 45, 266, 320
- Complete Song Lyrics of the Song Dynasty*, 6, 161
- concubine, 67, 217, 223, 289
- Confucianism, 1, 13, 36, 127–28, 171, 290; Neo-Confucianism, 222
- Conservatives, 229, 237, 255, 296, 310n4
- courtesans, 67, 76, 85; in Huang Tingjian, 254; in Liu Yong, 67, 74, 84–86; Shishi, 311n6; willow and, 264, 321; Xiuxiang, 86
- Cui, Gongdu, 50, 236, 344n3, 387–90
- Cui, Hu, 318
- Cui, Yingying, 331
- Dante: *La Vita Nuova*, 328; *De vulgari eloquentia*, 312
- Daoxue, 4, 199, 222, 302; “The Learning of the Way,” 1
- Dasheng Fu, 15, 238, 310–11, 366, 369–70
- dating, of lyrics: 232–34, 273, 310n4, 315, 376; Liu Yong and, 69; Su Shi and, 196, 198n4, 201n6, 224–25
- death, 14, 215–17, 300, 306–7, 382
- dicition: and the “high style,” 394–95; Li Qingzhao and, 351, 353; Liu Yong and, 94; Qin Guan and, 270–72; Su Shi and,

- 208, 215; Wang Zhuo and, 362–64; Zhu Dunru and, 366–67
- distance, 16–17; in Ouyang Xiu, 131; in Qin Guan, 284, 284n37; in Su Shi, 216, 219, 222; in *xiaoling* songbooks, 156; in Yan Jidao, 176, 179–80; in Zhou Bangyan, 315–27, 340, 390
- domestic, the, 76–79, 83, 83n25, 223, 226, 307
- drinking rituals (*jiuling*), 12, 46, 104, 267
- Du, Anshi, 158, 392–93; “Du Wei niang,” 335; “Feng qi wu,” 95–96; “Feng xi wu,” 335; “Juhua xin,” 335–36
- Du, Fu, 11; and Chao Duanli, 242; and early circulation, 28; “Haphazard Inspirations: Quatrains,” 337; and He Zhu, 290; and Li Qingzhao, 377, 382–83; and Liu Yong, 64, 68–69; and Qin Guan, 271; and Xie Yi, 370; and Zhou Bangyan, 315, 334–35
- Du, Mu, 254, 271, 290, 321; “Describing How It Was,” 334–35; “In the Person of a Wuxing Singer,” 153–54; “Presented on Parting,” 184–85
- Dunhuang manuscripts, 56; “Yunyao ji,” 26, 49
- Egan, Ronald, 18, 125n1, 383; and Ouyang Xiu, 142, 145n25, 148; and Su Shi, 198, 205, 221n31, 224–25
- emerald peach (*bitao*), 262–64, 333
- Empress Dowager, 229, 255
- entertainment quarters, 9, 11, 354, 364, 368; Chao Buzhi and, 256; early circulation and, 29, 46; Liu Yong and, 64–67, 71–79, 87–95; and the *xiaoling* songbooks, 99, 117; Zhou Bangyan and, 316, 319–21, 337
- erotic, the, 36, 45, 359, 379, 385; the Entertainment Quarter and, 79; the “high style” and, 394–95; the image and, 83; memory and, 183; Su Shi and, 219–20; *xiaoling* songbooks and, 108, 137, 153; Zhou Bangyan and, 338. *See also* sex
- error, textual: 23, 25n8, 33, 136
- escapism, 2
- familiar, the, 57, 92, 102, 120, 174; Liu Yong and, 70; the *Yangchun ji* and, 111–12, 114
- family, 2–3, 27; figurative, 202–3, 349–50
- Fan, Chunren, 22, 24–25, 33, 169, 259n40
- Fan, Li, 92, 207–8
- Fan, Zhongyan, 102, 169, 259n40; “Sumuzhe,” 161–62
- Faxiu, 171, 249, 251, 253
- feminine, the, 3, 47, 202, 266, 287–88. *See also* women
- Feng, Yansi, 7–8, 236, 343, 347, 356; “Cai sangzi,” 113–14; “Die lian hua,” 139, 155; and early circulation, 26–30, 33, 41; and Liu Yong, 65, 70; manuscripts of, 387–91; “Que ta zhi,” 104–6, 111–12, 115, 139–40, 152n33, 175–76; sources for, 50–51; and Su Shi, 196, 198, 202; and *xiaoling* songbooks, 11, 99–102; *Yangchun ji*, 12, 103, 123, 129, 136, 166; and Yan Shu, 116–17, 122–24; and Zhang Xian, 150, 152. *See also* Chen Shixiu: *Yangchun ji*
- festivals, 174, 333, 370; Clear and Bright Festival, 160, 370–72, 371n19; Cold Food Festival, 175, 384; Duanwu Festival, 224; Lantern Festival, 88, 338, 340, 373–74
- figurative reading, 225
- fishermen: in Liu Yong, 88, 90, 92, 98; in Ouyang Xiu, 131; in Qin Guan, 275, 277–81
- Five Dynasties song, 7, 17, 49, 288, 343
- forgery, 13, 195, 390
- fragments, 18, 49, 173, 175, 272, 325
- Fu, Gan, 200
- Fucha (King of Wu), 207–8
- Fuya geci (*Song Lyrics Restoring the High Style*), 39–40, 395
- Gao, Chan, 263
- ge (blocked). *See* blockage
- gender, 3, 171, 197; singers and, 44n42, 46–47; *xiaoling* songbooks and, 103, 109–110, 112. *See also* feminine, the; masculine, the; women
- geshi (songs), 27

- Gu, Kuang: "The Road to Chang'an," 301-2;
 "Sad Songs," 300-301
Gujin cihua, 39, 58
- Han, Wei, 169, 171
 Han, Wo: "Conveying Grievance," 294-95
 Han Music Bureau (Yuefu), 31
haofang (brash), 197, 265-66
 He, Zhu, 15-16, 344-45, 348, 352-53, 362;
 "Chou nu'er," 291-92; *Dongshan ci*, 285-86,
 291n11, 299n23; and early circulation, 25,
 37; "The Genuine When Drunk," 297-98;
 "Half-Dead Tung Tree," 305-7; "Hard
 Traveling," 299-302; "The Hengtang
 Road," 303-7; and He Zhu, 287-90; and
 Huang Tingjian, 245-46; "Jiangchengzi,"
 293-94; "Liuzhou getou," 286; "Pusa man,"
 296-97; and Qin Guan, 261-62; and Su
 Shi, 196, 222, 230, 233, 235; "Ta suo xing,"
 295-96; and *xiaoling* songbooks, 161; and
 Zhou Bangyan, 309, 312
hesheng (filler words), 55, 345, 347, 354-55
 heterometric lyric, 9, 36, 58-59, 349-50,
 355-56, 364
 high style. See *yaci* (lyrics in the high style)
 Hu, Zi, 55n5; *Tiaoxi yuyin conghua*, 40, 235,
 248, 357
Hua'an cixuan, 269, 272
Huajian ji (Collection from Among the
 Flowers), 17, 346-47, 351, 354-57, 365;
 attribution in, 12, 100, 101n4, 103; and early
 circulation, 25-28, 33, 40-41; and He
 Zhu, 296-97; and Liu Yong, 65; and the
 manuscripts of Feng Yansi, 388-90; and
 the origin of *ci*, 56; and Ouyang Xiu, 129;
 reference to, 343-44; as source for Tang
 and Five Dynasties song, 7-8, 49-51; and
 Xie Yi, 367-68; and Yan Jidao, 166
 Huarui, Furen, 343
 Huang, Chang, 11, 25, 68-69, 88, 273
 Huang, Dayu: *Meiyuan*, 39, 361-62, 370, 379
 Huang, Sheng, 369-70; *Tang Song zhuxian*
juemiao cixuan, 160, 379
- Huang, Tingjian: "Gui tian le yin," 252-53;
 "Moshan xi," 253-54; "Niannu jiao,"
 231-32, 248-49; "Qingping yue," 249-50;
 "Xinyuan chun," 251-52
 Huangfu, Song, 49-50, 55, 355
Huichen lu (Accounts of Brushing Away the
 Dust). See under Wang Mingqing
 Huizong, 15, 17-18, 345, 353; and Chao
 Duanli, 238; and early circulation, 35; and
 Li Qingzhao, 380, 384; and Li Zhiyi, 259;
 and Su Shi, 229, 231, 234-35; and Wang
 Zhuo, 366; and Xie Yi, 369, 372-73; and
 Yan Jidao, 169; and Zhou Bangyan, 308,
 310-11, 311n6. See also Dasheng Fu
Huizong citan yanjiu (A Study of the Lyric
 Field of Huizong's Reign). See under Zhuge
 Yibing
- image: in He Zhu, 288, 294, 305; in Liu
 Yong, 73, 80-85, 91, 93, 97; in Li Zhiyi,
 260, 346; in Ouyang Xiu, 144; of presence,
 182, 271-72; in Qin Guan, 280; in Su Shi,
 214, 217; in the *Yangchun ji*, 111; in Yan
 Jidao, 174, 179-81, 185, 187, 190; in Zhang
 Xian, 155; in Zhou Bangyan, 320, 324,
 335-36. See also representation
 imitation, 91, 163, 167, 198, 269, 296. See also
 mimesis
 immediacy, 180-81, 186, 245, 305, 312
 influence: of classical poetics, 246; of *Hua-
 jian ji*, 354; of Liu Yong, 11; of the singer,
 356; Su Shi and, 208, 231. See also classical
 poetry: appropriation; reuse
 interior, the, 93, 105, 113-15, 177, 291, 326
 irony, 13, 122, 165, 210, 221, 366
 isometric poetry, 9, 50, 52-53, 55-58, 91, 355
- Ji, Yougong: *Tangshi jishi*, 39
 Jia, Yi, 336
 Jiang, Kui, 359
Jiaofang ji, 356
Jiayan ji (Collection for Household Banquets),
 24n5, 25-26, 51, 102, 343
jiju. See cento (*jiju*)

- Jinti yuefu* (New-style Yuefu). See under Ouyang Xiu
- jiuling*. See drinking rituals (*jiuling*)
- Kou, Zhun, 59; "Lay of Yang Pass," 55-57
- landscape, 323; Huang Tingjian and, 254n25; Liu Yong and, 86, 91-92, 94, 208; Qin Guan and, 270; Su Shi and, 205; Yan Jidao and, 184; Yan Shu and, 107; Zhou Bangyan and, 339
- Leibian Caotang shiyu*, 379
- Li, Bai, 97, 129, 132, 177, 298-99; "Lyrics on Taking Pleasure in the Palace," 177
- Li, Fangshu: "Pinling" 43-44
- Li, Guan: "Die lian hua," 160; "Liuzhou getou," 160-61
- Li, He, 154; "Southern Garden," 294
- Li, Jing, 8, 103, 110, 356
- Li, Qingzhao, 5, 18, 231n5, 354, 359-60, 375-83; "Discourse on Song Lyric," 17, 44n42, 172-73, 344, 348-53, 355-56; and early circulation, 38; and the "high style," 394; and Huang Tingjian, 247; and Liu Yong, 83; "Nan gezi," 380-81; "Niannu jiao," 383-84; and Ouyang Xiu, 140; and Su Shi, 198, 203; and *xiaoling* songbooks, 157, 159; "Yujia ao," 381-83; and Zhou Bangyan, 308-9
- Li, Shangyin, 140, 178n20, 294, 304, 317-18, 321; "Brocade Zither," 304; "Left Untitled," 292-93
- Li, Yu, 8, 343; and early circulation, 27, 29; Li Qingzhao on, 357; and Liu Yong, 65, 70; Li Zhiyi on, 347; "Pusa man," 392-93; sources for, 50-51; and the *xiaoling* songbooks, 103, 160; and the *Yangchun ji*, 110; "Yu meiren," 52-53
- Li, Zhiyi, 15, 17; colophon on lyrics by He Zhu, 289-90; colophon for Wu Ke's classical poems, 345-51; and early circulation, 37; and Li Qingzhao, 344, 352, 354-56; and Qin Guan, 258, 259-60; and Su Shi, 230, 233-34, 245; and Wu Ke, 367; and the *xiaoling* songbooks, 158-59; and Zhang Xian, 156; "Zhegu tian," 259-60
- lian (love), 82, 119n25
- lianzhang (sequence), 32, 129
- lingzi, 204-5
- Liu, Bin, 102
- Liu, Bing, 311
- Liu, Chang, 135-36, 159
- Liu, Sanjie, 63
- Liu, Yong, 7-8, 93-98, 385-86; "Changshou yue," 66-67; and Chao Buzhi, 256, 258; and Chao Duanli, 240; "Ding fengbo," 77, 83, 331-32; "Dou baihua," 84-85; and early circulation, 25, 29, 31, 33; and the Entertainment Quarter, 73; "Feng gui yun," 97-98; "Feng xian bei," 80-81; "He chuan," 143-44; and Huang Tingjian, 251, 253-54; "Jintang chun," 76-77, 79; "Ji Tianshen," 88-89; "Ju hua xin," 83-84; "Kan hua hui," 94-96; lamp by the bed in, 182; Li Qingzhao on, 352; "Liu yao qing," 71-72; Li Zhiyi on, 346-47, 350; and *manci*, 11, 14, 16, 70, 358; "Man juan chou," 74; and Ouyang Xiu, 148; and Qin Guan, 269-73, 276-77, 284; "Rui zhegu," 75-76; "Shuangshengzi," 207-8; and Su Shi, 196, 200-3, 211-12, 215-16; "Wang haichao," 85-86, 274-75; Wang Zhuo on, 360, 363, 365; and *xiaoling* songbooks, 101, 105, 108; "Xichun lang," 32; and the *Yangchun ji*, 115; and Yan Jidao, 163, 171, 173n13, 180; and Yan Shu, 116-17, 119, 121; "Yeban yue," 89-93, 204-5; "Yingchun yue," 81-83, 85; *Yuezhang ji*, 10, 37, 63-65, 68-69, 86-87, 238, 351; "Yu hudie," 21-22; and Zhang Xian, 149-50, 156; and Zhou Bangyan, 315, 320, 324-26, 340; and Zhu Dunru, 366; 394
- Liu, Yuxi, 318, 320, 330, 334
- Liushijia ci*, 397
- longing, 3-4, 315, 318, 327, 378; in Chao Duanli, 239; in He Zhu, 290; in Huang Tingjian, 253; in Liu Yong, 64, 73, 80, 82, 87, 91-93; in Ouyang Xiu, 130, 137, 144; in Qin Guan, 265, 277; in Su Shi, 205, 219; in the *xiaoling* songbooks, 103, 108, 161-62; in the *Yangchun ji*, 112; in Yan Jidao, 174-76, 191-92; in Yan Shu, 121

- love: and blockage, 327, 331–32; in Chao Duanli, 252–53; dating lyrics on, 233, 273, 315; displacement and theme of, 4, 82–83, 315; and distance, 318, 325; in He Zhu, 287–90, 294, 298, 303–4, 307; in Liu Yong, 11, 21, 67, 73–77, 81, 84, 89; in Li Yu, 392; lost love, 1, 106–7, 320–21; in Ouyang Xiu, 137, 148; Qin Guan and, 262–65, 274, 277, 282; in Shu Dan, 236–37; in Su Shi, 204, 215, 218, 222–23, 249; in types of *xiaoling*, 108–10; in the *Yangchu ji*, 113, 115; in Yan Jidao, 173–74, 178, 180, 183–85, 188–91; in Yan Shu, 243; in Zhang Xian, 153–55; in the *Zhuyi ci*, 118–19, 121, 123. *See also* longing
- Lüchuang xinhua* (*New Tales by the Green Window*), 263
- Luo, Bi, 41, 138, 389–91; *Jinti yuefu*, 116n22, 126–29, 136, 139, 146–48, 387; *Pingshan ji*, 127–28, 136
- Luo, Kanglie, 230n2, 309–10n4, 334
- manci* (long lyrics), 10–11, 13–16, 347, 358; and Chao Duanli, 237–38; and early circulation, 29, 31, 46; and Huang Tingjian, 249, 251; and Liu Yong, 64, 70–72, 87–88, 91, 93, 96; and Qin Guan, 269, 271, 280; and Su Shi, 196n2, 197, 202–4, 211–15, 216, 232–34; and the *xiaoling* songbooks, 100, 160–61; and Xie Yi, 372; and Yan Jidao, 164, 166; and Yan Shu, 119; and Zhang Xian, 149, 151, 156; and Zhou Bangyan, 315–17, 324–25, 331–32; and Zhu Dunru, 367
- manuscripts: 127n2, 358, 361; early circulation and, 33, 35, 38, 42–43
- Mao, Jin, 42, 313, 396–97
- masculine, the, 3, 47, 215. *See also* men
- Meiyuan* (*Plum Garden*). *See under* Huang Dayu
- memory, 2, 172; and blockage, 330–32; and distance, 317, 319, 321, 324, 326–27; and early circulation, 22, 24, 30, 40; He Zhu and, 294; Liu Yong and, 81–82, 92; and “meta-lyric,” 188; Ouyang Xiu and, 131; Su Shi and, 212, 223; Yan Jidao and, 172–85; Zhou Bangyan and, 314
- men, 4, 43–45, 44n42, 103–4, 266, 356n16. *See also* masculine, the
- meta-lyric, 186–88
- meter, 213
- mimesis, 56, 76
- monologue, 240, 256, 383
- Moqi, Yong, 359, 363–64, 386; and “high style,” 394–95; “Santai,” 370–72; and Xie Yi, 369; “Zhaojun yuan,” 372–73; and Zhou Bangyan, 311; and Zhu Dunru, 366
- moralism, 15, 222, 253, 267; Ouyang Xiu and, 128, 130–31, 138
- motif: absorption in the moment, 82; authorship and, 144–45; in banal lyrics, 111, 122; disempowered woman, 253; “Drunken Lord,” 226; of loss, 327; meeting an old love, 115, 237; of not remembering, 124, 183; in poems praising cities, 86; separated lovers, 331; solitary melancholy, 151; spring, 305; woman’s resentment, 75, 154, 237, 297
- musicality, 14, 245; Li Qingzhao and, 351, 353–54, 356; Yan Jidao and, 173; Zhang Xian and, 156; Zhou Bangyan and, 311
- Nan Tang erzhu ci*, 30, 49, 51, 70, 391–92
- narrative, 8, 234, 332, 356, 360; He Zhu and, 293–94; Ouyang Xiu and, 142; Yan Jidao and, 166; Zhou Bangyan and, 310
- Nenggaizhai manlu* (*Random Notes from Able-to-Change Studio*). *See under* Wu Zeng
- nianyu* (performer presentation), 32, 129
- nostalgia, 28, 117, 172, 320, 340
- notepaper, 22, 80, 121–22, 186–88
- occasional subtitles, 14–15, 376, 276n30; Ouyang Xiu and, 135; Su Shi and, 200, 232; Zhang Xian, 149–50
- Ouyang, Jiong: preface to *Huajian ji*, 49
- Ouyang, Xiu, 7, 11–13, 360, 386, 393; “Cai sangzi,” 130–34, 136, 146, 228; and Chao Duanli, 238; “Chaozhong cuo,” 135–36, 276; “Die lian hua,” 139–40, 142–43, 145,

- 147–48, 155–56, 175–76; “Ding fengbo,” 140–41; and early circulation, 29–33, 35–41, 43; “Gui zi yao,” 136; and “high style,” 395; and Huang Tingjian, 247; *Jinti yuefu*, 116n22, 125–29, 125n1, 237, 385, 387, 394; “Lang tao sha,” 140–41; and Li Qingzhao, 352, 375; Li Zhiyi on, 346–47, 349–50; and the manuscripts of Feng Yansi, 388–90; *Pingshan ji*, 127–28, 136; and Qin Guan, 271, 279, 281; and reference to place, 233; and Su Shi, 195, 200, 202, 228, 231; “Ta suo xing,” 137–38; and the *xiaoling* songbooks, 99–103, 157–58; and the *Yanchun ji*, 111; and Yan Jidao, 166, 171; “Yicong hua,” 140; and *Yuefu yaci*, 235; “Yujia ao,” 144–46; and Zhang Xian, 149; *Zuiweng qinqu waipian*, 125n1, 137–38, 237–38, 394
- Ouyang Wenzhong *ji*, 128
- painting: Liu Yong and, 81; Qin Guan and, 263, 270; Su Shi and, 204, 207–8; Yan Jidao and, 169, 184; Zhou Bangyan and, 325, 329
- Palumbo-Liu, David, 250
- Pan, Lang: “Jiuquanzi,” 26, 129–31
- Panpan, 200, 217–21, 221n31
- parallel prose, 32, 128
- parting, 2, 24n6, 53–58; in Chao Dunli, 239, 241; in He Zhu, 292, 295; in Huang Tingjian, 252, 254n27; and landscapes, 92; in Qin Guan, 264–268, 277, 283–84; in Su Shi, 212; in the *xiaoling* songbooks, 107, 159; in the *Yangchun ji*, 115; in Yan Jidao, 182–86; in Zhou Bangyan, 330; in the *Zhuyi ci*, 122–23
- Peng, Guozhong: *Yuanyou citan yanjiu*, 235
- performance, 4, 7, 9, 12, 385; Chao Buzhi and, 257; early circulation and, 21, 24–25, 32, 44, 46–47; He Zhu and, 297; Huang Tingjian and, 252; Liu Yong and, 71, 75, 77, 87–89; performance text, 5; Su Shi and, 195, 210–11, 217; and textual “drift,” 393; the *xiaoling* songbooks and, 105, 110, 122, 151; Yan Jidao and, 172, 181, 186–89, 191–92; Yan Shu and, 395. *See also* singers
- personification, 168–69, 185
- Petrarch, 328
- Ping Mountain Hall, 135–36, 138, 176
- preface, 4, 7, 33, 81, 134, 232; by Bai Juyi, 217; by Chao Qianzhi, 41; by Chen Shixiu, 26–28, 30, 65, 389; by Chen Zhensun, 391; by Huang Tiangjian, 164–65, 171–72, 251; by Liu Su, 313; by Ouyang Jiong, 49; by Qiang Huan, 34n23, 321; by Su Shi, 14, 198, 200, 248, 262; by Wang Zhuo, 361; by Yan Jidao, 13, 22–25, 169–70, 179n22; by Zeng Zao, 5, 35–36, 359, 394; by Zhang Lei, 286; by Zhang Xian, 12, 99, 116, 150, 196; by Zhou Bangyan, 311, 369; *Zunqian ji* and, 50
- presence, 131, 174, 182, 284; images of, 271. *See also* authorial presence
- print, 18, 28, 35, 40, 127n2, 233; print culture, 42, 358
- prostitute, 45–46
- Qian, Xisheng, 8
- Qiang, Huan, 34n23, 41–43, 313, 315n11, 321
- Qin, Guan, 15–17; and Chao Buzhi, 258; and Chao Duanli, 237; and early circulation, 38; and He Zhu, 285, 288–89; and Huang Tingjian, 245–46; Li Qingzhao on, 352–53; Li Zhiyi on, 345, 348; lyric in praise of Yangzhou, 275–77; “Man ting fang,” 268–70, 280–81, 334; and Qin Guan, 261–67, 271–74, 278–79; “Que qiao xian,” 282–84; and Su Shi, 202n10, 230, 232–33, 235; Wang Zhuo on, 362; and Yan Jidao, 163; and Zhou Bangyan, 312, 332–33
- Qinqu waipian* (*Zither Delights*) series, 247
- Qu, Yuan, 91, 120, 224n34, 237n5, 296
- Quanfang beizu* (*Comprehensive Ancestor of All Flowers*), 379
- Quan Song ci* (*Complete Song Lyrics of the Song Dynasty*). *See under* Tang Guizhang

- reciting. See *yin* (reciting); *yinyong* (reciting)
- recluse, 26, 55n5, 131, 205, 300n25, 301–2
- reference, 352, 382; in Chao Duanli, 242; in He Zhu, 304, 306; internal, 14, 23, 105, 297, 317–18; in Liu Yong, 98; in Qin Guan, 276; in Zhou Bangyan, 334
- Ren, An, 203
- Ren, Bantang: *Tang shengshi*, 52
- Renjian cihua* (*Remarks on Lyrics from the Human World*). See under Wang Guowei
- Renzong (Emperor), 68, 79, 102
- repetition, 24, 54, 58–59; in the *Yanchun ji*, 111–12, 114; in Yan Jidao, 169, 178, 180, 182; in Zhou Bangyan, 320, 327
- representation: of the body, 174; of courtship, 4, 288; of distance, 321, 324; and the historical author, 65, 105; and the imagined image, 80–83, 85; of male longing, 73; in Qin Guan, 271, 284n37; as “traces,” 184; of women, 77
- repression, 222, 229, 253
- reuse, 4, 56n7, 288, 335; Chao Buzhi and, 246; Qin Guan and, 272; Su Shi and, 195, 205; the *xiaoling* songbooks and, 144, 149–50
- reversal, 92–93
- rhyme: deflected, 56, 59; and early circulation, 27, 31; He Zhu and, 305; Huang Tingjian and, 247; level, 56, 59; Li Qingzhao and, 384; Liu Yong and, 91; Li Zhiyi and, 347; Ouyang Xiu and, 142; Qin Guan and, 264; Su Shi and, 220; Zhang Xian and, 154; Zhou Bangyan and, 308, 329, 331
- sanqu* (vernacular songs), 93, 386
- scandal, 29, 83, 125n1, 147–48, 379
- sensibility, 3, 16, 103, 264–67, 296
- Seventh Eve, 247, 282–84
- sewing, 83–84, 83n25, 182
- sex, 29; in He Zhu, 294, 305; in Liu Yong, 73–74, 80–86; in Ouyang Xiu, 128, 147–48; in Qin Guan, 284; and singers 45–47; in Yan Jidao, 174, 182; in Zhou Bangyan, 320–21
- Shenzong (Emperor), 228, 309
- shi*. See classical poetry
- Shields, Anna, 7
- shihua* (remarks on poetry), 30, 235
- Shijing*, 30–31, 166
- shiyu* (surplus of classical poetry), 2
- Shu, Dan, 15, 37, 235, 260, 263; “Die lian hua,” 236–37
- Sikong, Tu: “Five Poems Written Casually,” 334
- Sima, Qian, 203, 349
- singers, 4–5, 9, 11, 18, 395; Chao Dunli and, 241n14, 242–43; early circulation and, 22–26, 30–34, 41–47; and the “high style,” 385; Huang Tingjian and, 253–54; in Li Qingzhao, 355–56; Liu Yong and, 67, 70–72, 74, 86–89; Ouyang Xiu and, 128, 128n3, 146; Qin Guan and, 262, 264; Su Shi and, 195, 210, 215; and textual “drift,” 393; and the *xiaoling* songbooks, 101–6, 109–10, 112; Yan Jidao and, 170–72, 177–78, 179n22, 181, 188, 189–91; Yan Shu and, 116–19; *yinkuo* and, 9, 53–57, 59, 290, 347; Zhang Xian and, 150–51, 156; Zhou Bangyan and, 312–13
- slang, 15, 251
- Song, Qi, 158, 346–47, 351–52; “Lang tao sha jin,” 159
- songbook, 10–11, 26, 101–2, 195, 200
- song lyric proper. See *bense* (song lyric proper)
- song types, 93; banquet lyrics, 103, 243; lotus-picking, 143–45; love lyric, 73, 188, 204, 223; songs of the rake, 94; songs of the traveler, 94; of *xiaoling*, 107–10
- specificity, 54, 64, 134–35, 241
- state management, 1
- subtitles, 14, 101, 134, 241. See also occasional subtitles
- Su, Che, 213, 215
- Su, Dongpo. See Su Shi
- Su, Shi, 1, 3, 7, 13–16, 357; “Busuanzi,” 224–25; “Die lian hua,” 221–22; “Dongxiang ge,” 343–44; and early circulation, 25, 28, 33–34, 36, 38, 41; the generation after,

- 228, 232–37; and He Zhu, 285–86, 290, 305–6; and the “high style,” 386; “Huan xi sha,” 224, 279–80; “Jiangchengzi,” 190, 201–2, 208–9, 211, 215–17; “Lin jiang xian,” 225–26; and Li Qingzhao, 352–53, 375–76; as literary presence, 196–200, 358; and Liu Yong, 64–65, 93, 98, 205–6; Li Zhiyi on, 344n5, 345, 348–49; “Manting fang,” 96–97; “Mulan hua ling,” 31–32; “Nian-nu jiao,” 206–8; and Ouyang Xiu, 140; protégés of, 244–49, 251, 254–56, 258–60; and Qin Guan, 261–62, 266–67, 269–72, 273, 277; “Qin yuan chun,” 213–16; “Ru meng ling,” 344; “Shuidiao getou,” 135–36; “Shuilong yin,” 264–65; and singers, 43, 46–47; “A Small Hunt on Returning,” 209–10; sources for, 54, 59; “Su Shi learning,” 229–31; “Ti ren jiao,” 223–24; Wang Zhuo on, 360–61, 365–66; “Xingxiangzi,” 203–4; and Yan Jidao, 165–66, 169–70, 176, 190; “Yong yu le,” 217–21; and Zhang Xian, 149–50, 153, 156–57; and Zhou Bangyan, 308–9, 311–12, 315, 323–24, 327; “Zui luopo,” 211–12
- Suishi guangji* (*Broad Record of the Seasons of the Year*). See under Chen Yuanjing
- survival advantage, 15, 30, 285, 358
- Swallow House, 217–21
- Tang, Guizhang, 140; *Quan Song ci*, 6, 268, 393
- Tang shengshi* (*Voiced Poems of the Tang*). See under Ren Bantang
- Tang song, 296, 344, 354, 356; sources for, 48, 54–55, 59
- Tao, Erfu, 259
- Tao, Qian, 81, 257; “Peach Blossom Spring,” 123
- Tao, Xiang, 397
- textualization, 9–10, 25, 121–22
- thematization, 111, 134
- Tiaoxi yuyin conghua* (*Collected Comments from the Fisherman Recluse of Tiao Creek*). See under Hu Zi
- Tongrui Gazetteer* (*Tongrui zhi*). See *Tongrui zhi* (*Tongrui Gazetteer*)
- Tongrui zhi* (*Tongrui Gazetteer*), 387–88
- transcription, 9, 48, 52, 56
- transmission, 9, 48, 51, 396; and early circulation, 23–24, 30, 33, 40, 42; He Zhu and, 285; Wang Zhuo and, 365
- values, 244–45, 349; He Zhu and, 286, 288, 300n25, 302; Liu Yong and, 73, 76, 98; public, 2–3, 119, 222, 308; Qin Guan and, 266–67, 284. See also moralism
- vernacular, the, 10, 53, 366, 383–86, 394; Cao Zu and, 374; Chao Buzhi and, 258; Chao Duanli and, 238, 240; early circulation and, 36; Huang Tingjian and, 250–51, 253–54; Liu Yong and, 82, 93; Su Shi and, 198, 233; the *xiaoling* songbooks and, 146–47; Yan Jidao and, 188; Zhou Bangyan and, 312, 332
- vignette, 108, 142
- voyeurism, 78, 103, 114, 142
- waka*, 166
- Wang, Anshi, 228–29, 236, 349–50, 352, 357; and Chao Buzhi, 255; and early circulation, 34, 37; “Guizhi xiang,” 207–8; and He Zhu, 296; and Huang Tingjian, 250; and Ouyang Xiu, 127n2, 140; and Su Shi, 199, 207, 222; and Zhou Bangyan, 309
- Wang, Guowei, 17, 332; *Renjian cihua* 327–28
- Wang, Huizhi, 91–93
- Wang, Junyu, 45, 71; *Zazuan xu*, 44, 46, 70
- Wang, Mingqing; *Huichen lu*, 332
- Wang, Shishen, 121
- Wang, Wei, 10, 53, 176; “Watching the Hunt,” 209–10; “Yangguan qu” 54–59
- Wang, Zhu, 28
- Wang, Zhuo, 9, 11, 18, 233, 386, 394–95; and Cao Zu, 373–75; and early circulation, 44; and He Zhu, 286; and Huang Tingjian, 247; and Li Qingzhao, 376–80; “The Strength and Weaknesses of the Famous Lyricists,” 349–54, 359–66; and Xie Yi,

- 370; and Zhou Bangyan, 310; and Zhu Dunru, 367. See also *Biji manzhi* (*Random Notes from Emerald Cock Ward*)
- wanyue (tender and delicate), 197, 265–66, 277
- weariness, 138, 333–40
- Wei, Zhuang, 49, 129, 297
- Wen, Tingyun, 50, 56, 368, 378–79; *Jinquan ji*, 259, 49; “Pusa man,” 297
- Weng, Hong, 176
- wenwu (cultural material), 30
- Wenying, 195
- West Lake, 31–32, 129–34, 228, 374, 281
- Willow Branch, 178n20, 317–318, 321
- women, 3–4, 109, 258, 284, 377–79; absent, 215–224; early circulation and, 36; Liu Yong and, 73; representation of, 65, 77; as singers, 43–45, 103–4, 116. See also feminine, the
- word games, 386
- Wu, Changshou, 397
- Wu, Ke, 17, 37, 344–45, 347–48, 354, 367
- Wu, Ne, 8, 200. See also *Baijia ci* (*Lyrics by a Hundred Masters*)
- Wu, Wenzhi: *Zhongshan shihua*, 102
- Wu, Xionghe, 149
- Wu, Zeng: *Nenggaizhi cihua*, 286; *Nenggaizhai manlu*, 24n6, 34, 40
- Wu, Zixu, 382
- Wu Mountain, 156, 178–80, 284, 303
- Xi, Shi, 92
- Xianyu, Shen, 202–3
- xiaoling (short lyrics), 10–13, 15–16, 228, 232–34, 236; and advertising, 87; and Chao Dunli, 237–38, 240; and early circulation, 22–24, 29, 31, 46; and the Entertainment Quarter, 74, 76; and He Zhu, 296–97, 304; and Huang Tingjian, 250; and image, 81; and landscape, 91, 95; and Li Qingzhao, 381; and *manci*, 70–72, 211, 213–15; and memory, 178, 183; and “meta-lyric,” 186–88, 192; and Qin Guan, 273, 276–77; “Ru meng ling,” 344; sources for, 55; and Su Shi, 196, 202, 221, 226; types of, 107–10; and Xie Yi, 368, 372; and Yan Jidao, 164, 166–67, 173n13; and Zhou Bangyan, 312, 314, 317, 320. See also Feng Yansi: *Yangchun ji*; Ouyang Xiu; Zhang Xian; Yan Shu: *Zhuyu ci*
- Xiaoshan ci, 172. See also Yan Jidao: *Yuefu buwang*
- Xie, Yi, 38, 367–69; “Ta suo xing,” 368–69; “Yu meiren,” 368
- xiexue (rascally wit), 36, 37n28, 373, 394
- Xin, Qiji, 47, 197, 359, 384
- Xin'an Gazetteer* (*Xin'an zhi*). See *Xin'an zhi* (*Xin'an Gazetteer*)
- Xin'an zhi* (*Xin'an Gazetteer*), 387–89
- xinci (new lyrics), 22, 24, 103, 110, 112, 266; Yan Shu and, 103, 110, 150–51
- Xue, Neng: “Wu Maiden,” 291–93
- yaci (lyrics in the high style), 36–37, 36n27, 363, 374, 386, 394
- Yan, Guang, 205
- Yan, Jidao, 7, 13–14, 163–65, 170–71, 230; “Cai sangzi,” 190–91; and Chao Duanli, 237, 241; “Die lian hua,” 175, 183–85; and early circulation, 22–23, 25, 28–29, 33, 38; and He Zhu, 287, 288; and Huang Tingjian, 246, 251; “Lin jiang xian,” 173–74, 176–77; Li Qingzhao on, 352–53; “Mulan hua,” 177–78, 316–17; and Peng Guozhong, 235; “Pusa man,” 191–92; “Qingping yue,” 187–88; and Qin Guan, 273; and reference to place, 233; and Su Shi, 196, 210, 212, 223; and textual “drift,” 393; Wang Zhuo on, 362; and Yan Shu, 119, 124; *Yuefu buwang*, 24, 166, 172; “Yulou chun,” 122–23, 167–69, 185–86, 189–90; and Zhao Lingzhi, 232; “Zhegu tian,” 179–82, 186; and Zhou Bangyan, 308, 312, 314, 318, 320–21
- Yan, Shu, 1, 3–4, 7–8, 13, 393; “Cai sangzi,” 124; and Chao Duanli, 243; and early circulation, 24n6, 29, 38; and He Zhu, 297; and “high style,” 395; “Huan xi sha,” 106–7, 118–21, 298, 337; Li Qingzhao on, 352; and Liu Yong, 70, 73, 79, 83; Li Zhiyi on, 346–47, 349–50; and manuscripts of

- Feng Yansi, 388–90; “Mulan hua,” 119–20, 167–69; and Ouyang Xiu, 142; “Po zhen-zi,” 22, 121; “Qingping yue,” 122; and Su Shi, 196, 202; and the *xiaoling* songbooks, 100–105, 110, 123, 156–58, 161; and Yan Jidao, 163–64, 171, 181, 186; “Ye jinmen,” 117; and Zhang Xian, 149–51, 153; and Zhou Bangyan, 331; *Zhuyu ci*, 12, 99, 116–23
- Yan, Youyi: *Yiyuan cihuang*, 272–73
- Yang, Shi: *Gujin cihua*, 39, 58
- Yangchun ji* (Bright Spring). See under Feng Yansi
- “Yangguan qu” (“The Song of Yang Pass”). See under Wang Wei
- Ye, Mengde, 37, 231–32, 235, 309, 360–61, 375–76
- “Yi’an ti,” 383
- yijia (one family), 202–3, 349
- yin (reciting), 14, 44, 297
- Yingkan Song Jin Yuan Mingben ci*, 397
- yinkuo, 9, 53, 55–56, 290, 347; Huang Tingjian and, 246, 250
- yinyong xingqing, 27, 65
- yinyong (reciting), 297
- yongwu ci (lyric on things), 238
- Yuan, Zhen, 378–79; “Yingying’s Story,” 260, 330–31
- Yuanyou citan yanjiu* (A Study of the Lyric Field of the Yuanyou Reign). See under Peng Guozhong
- yuefu, 3, 16, 350, 355; early circulation and, 26–27, 30–31; He Zhu and, 298–300, 307; Liu Yong and, 65; Ouyang Xiu and, 133; Yan Jidao and, 164, 170; Zhang Xian and, 153
- Yuefu buwang* (Filling in Missing Yuefu Lyrics). See under Yan Jidao
- Yuefu yaci* (Yuefu and Lyrics in the High Style), 5, 15–16, 49, 157, 359, 394–95; and Cao Zu, 373; and Chao Duanli, 234–35, 237; and early circulation, 35–40, 42; and He Zhu, 286, 293, 303; and Li Qingzhao, 376, 379, 383n42; and Li Zhiyi, 260; and Ouyang Xiu, 126, 136, 146; and Zhou Bangyan, 309
- yueyu (performer presentations), 128–29
- Zeng, Zao, 34, 41, 200, 360–61, 374, 380, 386. See also *Yuefu yaci* (Yuefu and Lyrics in the High Style)
- Zhang, Jianfeng, 217
- Zhang, Jie, 264
- Zhang, Lei, 196, 230, 230n4, 286–88, 287n5
- Zhang, Xian, 7–8, 11–13; and early circulation, 29, 33, 37; Li Qingzhao on, 352–53; and Liu Yong, 71; Li Zhiyi on, 346–47; “Pusa man,” 108–9; and Su Shi, 196, 202, 213, 215, 228; “Ta suo xing,” 109–10; “Tian xianzi,” 151–52; Wang Zhuo on, 362, 365; and the *xiaoling* songbooks, 99–102, 158–59; “Xing xiangzi,” 204–5; and Yan Jidao, 166, 170; and Yan Shu, 116; “Yicong hua,” 140, 154–55, 294; and Zhang Xian, 149, 153; *Zhang Ziye ci*, 150, 157; “Zui chui bian,” 155–56
- Zhang, Yin, 217–18
- Zhang, Zhihe, 290, 343; “Fisherman,” 247, 278–79
- Zhang, Zhongsu, 217–18
- Zhang, Zongsu, 121
- Zhao, Lingzhi, 37, 230, 232, 362; *Houqing lu*, 234, 260
- Zheng, Xia, 169
- Zhezong, 228–29, 255, 309–10
- zhiyu (performer presentation), 128–29
- zhongdiao, 202
- Zhongshan shihua* (Zhongshan’s Remarks on Poetry). See under Wu Wenzhi
- Zhou, Bangyan, 14–17, 344n5, 353, 362, 364–65, 397; and Cao Zu, 374; and early circulation, 37, 41; “Fengliuzi,” 328–33; “Gepu lian jin pai,” 257–58, 321–24; and He Zhu, 285; “Jie yu hua,” 338–40; and Li Qingzhao 377; 397; “Man tingfang,” 333–38; “Mulan hua ling,” 313–14; “Qing chun gong,” 324–27; and Qin Guan, 261–62, 269, 271; “Rui long yin,” 316–21; and Su Shi, 199, 230–31, 234, 235n6; and Xie Yi, 369; and Yan Jidao, 163

Zhu, Dunru, 38, 366, 376; "Partridge Sky,"
367
Zhuangzi, 97, 382–83
zhuanta, 36, 36n25

Zhuge, Yibing: *Huizong citan yanjiu*, 234–35
Zhuyu ji (*Pearls and Jade*), 166
Zunqian ji (*Before the Ale-cup*), 8, 25n9,
26n9, 50–51, 129, 388–92

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